

Biography of Joska Soos de Sovar, A Hungarian Shaman

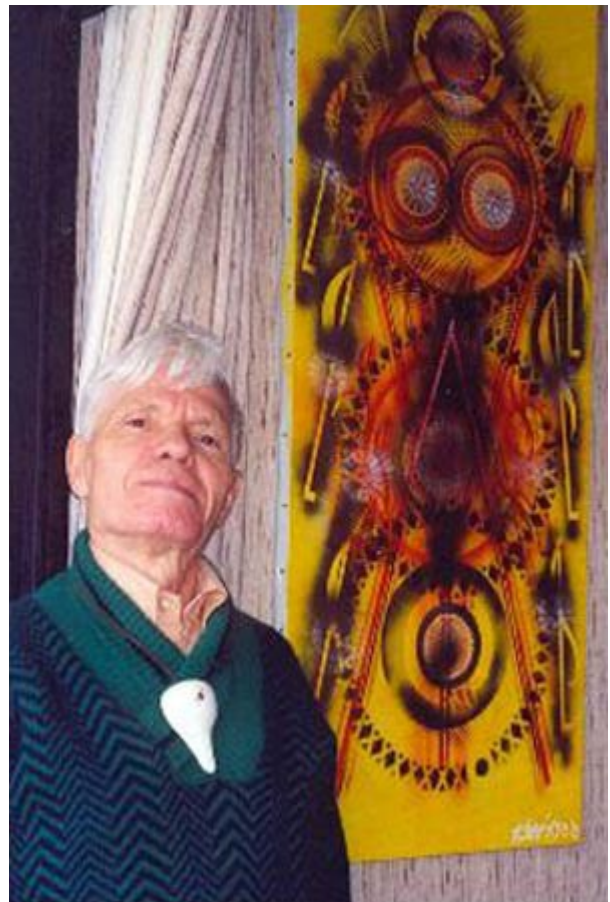
by Dirk Gillabel 2014

This is a liberal translation of part of the book, '*Joska Soos, Ik genees niet, ik herstel de harmonie*' (Joska Soos, I do not heal, I restore harmony), originally published in Dutch in 1985 by Karnak, Amsterdam. A few images are from the book, the rest I have added myself by way of illustration. The sixth chapter is not from the book, this I have written myself.

This is a important text. As far as I know there is no other autobiography, in the words of a shaman himself. Joska Soos tells in his own words, about his special birth, his younger years under the tutelage of the village shaman, his initiations, and his personal experiences with the world of sound. Joska Soos is the first and only shaman who has revealed the existence of the light-sound beings, of which he made numerous paintings and drawings.

Joska Soos was unique in the world of shamans, but he also understood that he had to bring his message to the growing community of spiritual seekers. Many people came to him, not only for his shamanizations, but also to learn and experience his teachings.

I hope you will enjoy Joska Soos' account of his life.



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Sound Self Portrait of Joska Soos, 1995

1. Look and Listen



Joska Soos as a child



His grandparents

I was born on December 20, 1921, in Apostag, about 80 km south of Budapest, at the banks of the Donau, but I was raised by my grandparents in Solt. Solt is 15 km more to the south. In Solt I passed my youth, from my fourth to my tenth years of age. Then I went to my parents in Budapest because I had to go to junior high school. During this time, till I was nineteen years old, I went on vacation every year. This way I kept my connection with the land, the people and the environment.



Apostag, from an old postcard

My relationship with shamanism dates farther back than my youth and birth because I came from a shaman clan. More than a thousand years ago, in 896, the Hungarians came to present Hungary. As with all Asiatic people, they had a shamanistic view of life. The Hungarian people consisted of 108 clans. One of them was the Bacsza clan, which was a shaman clan, and I was part of that clan. In Hungary, shamans are called *táltos*. That is a very old word. Even the Hungarian linguists were not able to find the root word of this word. *Táltos* actually is a winged horse, and the shaman was regarded as a winged man in the sense that he traveled like a bird. That is the meaning of *táltos*: somebody who travels between heaven and earth, and thus can make a connection between both.

In Hungary, the shaman clan had the same function as Levites had with the Jews, the Druids with the Celts, or the Brahmans in India. Being from such a clan has a lot of significance on the genetic level. Of course, it is not a merit that one is from

a priest caste, but it is an advantage on a practical level. During many generations they were engaged in spiritual practices. After twenty or thirty generations this will create results, that you can make use of.

I was also 'born with a caul', in the amniotic sac, what has a deep meaning in all cultures. A child, a girl or boy, was born with a caul, is so rare that it was regarded as a wonder, as something supernatural. In most cases it was a positive sign, that the child was a favorite of the Gods, a chosen one. However, in some regions of the earth, like in Africa, such a birth was considered as a negative sign, and such children were sometimes killed or abandoned. In general, it was considered a good sign. Scientists considered it superstition that existed all over the world, but did not have any special meaning. They thought it was only its rarity that made it sinful or wonderful.

In the 1920s a group of doctors in America wondered if there might be something more to it, something biological. It was discovered that it was very rare to be born with a caul, and that it also depends on the astrological situation. These births happen more under certain astrological signs than under other. Therefore, they began to research what is so special about it, and they discovered the following.

The birth of most children is difficult. It lasts a long time, and the child is born half choked, green and blue by lack of oxygen. Those who are born with a caul have still enough oxygen in the caul, and can continue to breath during the birth. With the difficult birth, the finest brains cells dies due to lack of oxygen. These cells are cells related to paranormal functions. These cells are damaged and die, because all cells can repair themselves but not the brain cells. In this way, people with a 'normal' birth lose their paranormal abilities by lack of oxygen. Those who are born with the caul retain their spiritual abilities.

Of course, that is not everything. It is not a lottery ticket. Social circumstances also play a role, as do family, diseases and the like; and these can help to develop these abilities.

There are three different kinds of being born with a caul. The head is covered with a piece of the amniotic sac, or the head and the shoulders, or the child is still completely inside the amniotic sac as in a balloon. I was inside the complete amniotic sac, and I was born by my own force. I was being expected a couple of days later, and thus nobody was at home. Everybody was working in the fields. My mother barely had the time to get into bed, and she didn't dare to do anything. I had to be born by my own power. Twenty to twenty-five minutes past until a neighbor women came inside. I was still inside the amniotic sac and connected with the navel string. My mother didn't dare to cut it because they didn't know if she could do this. I could have died. With all this, my left shoulder has moved, but they didn't notice it. Later on it grew into place, and it has become a very tender spot.

These two aspects, being a descendant of the Bacsá clan and being born with a caul, were the reason that the village shaman took me under his protection. The village shaman of Solt was also a blacksmith and horse trader, and he belonged to the Bacsá clan too. He was still practicing the shamanic tradition. When he heard

that I was born with a caul, he took me under his protection, with four or five other boys and girls who came from a shaman clan or who were born with a caul. These are two conditions to become a shaman. Girls were also present, because discrimination between men and women was not made. The only thing that counts is competence.

The name of the village shaman was Tamas Bacsi. Actually this was a nickname because the priest, in his Sunday sermon, was warning against him: "This man is an unbelieving Thomas because he wants to feel God before he can believe in Him." He is not a heretic, but he does want to have God in his hands first.

Actually, when one would ask Tamas Bacsi to tell about God and holy matters, he answered that you had to seek inside yourself in order to experience it yourself. "I have met my God, and I am being infused by him more and more. I find him great, without borders. That I have discovered for myself, but I don't want to convince you, you have to discover that for yourself.

Thus, he urged people to self-discovery, to self-experience. That is why he was called Tamas Bacsi, that means, the man who only believes what he has in his hands. Find out for yourself how God looks, and under which circumstances he shows Himself. Discover that for yourself, that is your gain, but you have to work for that.

He also said: "Don't think that everything came into existence by itself, there is something behind it." For the shaman it is logical that there is something present behind the external apparitions.

I didn't live with him, but I did go to him as if going to a grandfather, and also on Sundays and holidays. He often took us with him when he was going 'to work', heal, or relieve pain, with people and animals, by laying on hands and singing. He told us: "Listen, listen and later you will understand." Now, after 55 years, those images return when I shamanize, or I call them deliberately. Images of things I have experienced with him, and then the meaning becomes clear, much clearer than when he would have explained it.

When he healed people or animals, he sang, not with words but with sounds. These have meaning by themselves as vibration. To feel what emanation a thing or man is radiating.

Now we know that objects radiate an aura, an energy, but also sound, vibration. Everything that is vibration is also sound and rhythm. In primal times, the shaman had already discovered this. In this way he tries to make contact with a problem.

Usually the problem is tension or relaxation, this is positive or negative as vibration. He tried to feel this as sound, and to understand the nature of the problem as sound. This is an intuitive process. Thus function you can bring out in yourself, because we all have this function. Tamas Bacsi taught us how to learn to perceive our own sound. In the first place of ourselves, because one starts from oneself, and later one learns the sound of things and people.

One tries to feel the sound vibration of problems, and of questions of oneself or of other people, or everything in the world: things, clouds, stones, the cosmic and the divine. One can feel everything as sound vibration. As a Hungarian saying tells us: "To enter into contact with God, one does not need a prayer." That is

vibration, what you can feel. That is what he taught us.

Therefore, I also use the Tibetan singing bowls with my shamanizations. These were used by monks who worked especially with sound, and who worked on people in a physical, psychological and psychical level. They also learned to feel the sound with themselves, and for that they had fixed mantras (lines of sounds which the monks would repeat for a long time). But these fixed mantras have to result in spontaneous sounds or groups of sounds, without images or words. That is the real mantra.

The shaman who uses sound lives in a state of inspiration. This functions in the same way as the beating of a heart, or the breath, completely independent of the will. It is a primal function in ourselves, which can be initiated just like the heart beat or the digestion. It is a human function, not magic, or maybe it is because it is such a mystery how the blood circulation happens. We can study it, and make a model, but we can't create it or really understand it.

That is what Tamas Bacsı primarily taught us, and the best teaching is an example. Therefore, he always said, and later I understood it: "One has to be open in a very special manner, namely being open unconditionally." Do not criticize, do not engage criticism. Only have criticism after you have collected enough material. That is also a way of thinking and living. One has to live in wonderment, like a child.

The child learns a language because it is in wonderment how adult can speak so easily, when it hears its father and mother speak. This wonderment is also the mystery of the human progress, in the small and in the large. Even great inventions in physics and exact sciences are done by people with the heart of a child. They are able to open themselves. This is a psychological condition: to remain without words, to be in wonder. It is not a formula. This is a psychological condition that Tamas Bacsı taught us, and that we had to develop.

He did this by never explaining us what was going to happen, or how it would happen, and this is why our wonderment was much bigger. That was a psychological method to guarantee that we would open us unconditionally. Logic or intelligence was not abolished, but it should be afterward, never before.

The western man first wants to understand and then to experience, but this is wrong. In this way you don't experience. Knowledge has to be experienced emotionally, not with reason and intellect only. In this way he also taught us how to come into contact with our own sound vibration. He would say: "You have to sing your emotions." One always has an emotion about something, for example, when you are hungry. When you concentrate on that hunger, on the cramp feeling in your stomach, and on what sound that evokes, then you can express that. Or you can concentrate on your heart beat or breath, and then sing your feeling of joy, sadness, or whatever.

In this way, he brought us along when a calf was being born, because he was often called for that, especially when they expected a difficult birth. He would say: "Come with me, and pay attention, because something will happen that you have never seen before. Therefore, it was an enormous surprise for us when the calf emerged, and he said: "Now you have to concentrate on what you are feeling, and go with your emotions, hèh-hèh-hèh. Let those emotions emerge, but as

sound." It is like someone running to catch a tram, and panting. In such a natural way one should concentrate on the sounds.

Another method was that he hit a thing and said: "Listen, and go with it." Then the sound arises in ourselves, because everything that is outside is also inside of us. In this way, the shaman tries to experience the vibration, to understand it, and especially to practice it.

Of course, I had the advantage that Tamas Bacsí was a spiritual healer, and not only someone who worked with herbs and the like. The spiritual is actually the highest level of healing. He always tried to feel people, and he said about that: "I do not heal, I restore the harmony." But that also depends on the people if this happens or not, because one can not do miracles, one can only create advantageous conditions.

He restored the harmony, and I also do. When people come to me with their problems, then I sing concerning their problems. By the emerging sounds inside myself, I enter a trance state, between waking and sleeping. This is a kind of hypnotic state, a trance that is controlled. This he taught us. Somebody who is seated next to me will not notice that I am in another state, in another vibration. It is like being seated next to a mathematician. You don't know what he is thinking. He can have the most brilliant ideas, but you don't notice it. Artists and other creative people have developed this state of inspiration in themselves. Usually they wait until inspiration comes, or they have to create advantageous circumstances, such as special meetings, love relationships, and the like, to bring their emotions into movement. The shaman, however, does not wait for inspiration. He calls up inspiration by, for example, beating his drum, by singing, or by using singing bowls.

Then sounds emerge in me, and I enter into contact with the person, and I get a psychological image from him. I am primarily focused on the spiritual, because all physical changes and problems have their origin the spiritual changes. Even in an accident in which you break your leg. Often enough your thoughts were somewhere else, or you were sad, or confused. Most accidents are not accidents, but the result of certain psychological attitudes. I feel that and then the sounds come up. That can happen within minutes, but usually it takes half an hour. It depends on the openness of the person, and of the favorable circumstances or atmosphere. I ask people to open themselves, not to believe but also not to not believe. No prejudice and no judgment afterward. This can be a problem because it can hinder contact with the spiritual. Being the goal of the spiritual shaman, he wants to reach the spirit, to become conscious, to expand consciousness, and to quicken the process.

This means that man has to become aware of his androgyne state. The double polarity inside of us needs to be unified, men with their anima, women with their animus. This is not a psychological image. We are twofold, even threefold because the neutral is also present.

This means that one has to become serene without hindrances with his anima or with her animus. Usually they have conflicts with another person, but actually these are conflicts with oneself. When a man is not happy with his wife, he actually is not happy with his own anima. It is the same with women. One

complains about the other, but it is not with the other where the problem is. The disharmony is within oneself.

When one comes into contact with these aspects, then one can come to harmony and serenity. That is why the saints in all religions are depicted in that serene state in which the double polarity in man has been united. This can be done by sound. Man is in harmony by nature. However, we are living in the everyday human world, not somewhere secluded in mountains or the desert. We are strongly influenced by the outside world. It is important to harmonize oneself with the outer world, and not only with the inner world. I try to tell it to people, and I teach them how they bring themselves in harmony with body, soul and spirit by vibration and sound. I use my instruments, the drum and the Tibetan singing bowls, to bring the other person to vibration and openness. When I shamanize for myself, for my own harmony, for my own spiritual development and awareness, I do not use any instruments, not even singing. I concentrate on the problem, and on attaining a greater harmony, a greater awareness of myself, and of people and things, and then I hear the sounds. Every time it is different. Sometimes the same sounds come up for two, three days, even sounds that I am not able to sing, like the sound of a hundred big bells. It is not possible to reproduce these sounds. You can only observe, not hearing it. This means that I hear it with my fingertips, my back, my chest, my head, anywhere. I hear and feel the vibration. I am not dependent on my ears, because I am listening with my entire body, similar to a radio-telescope.

There is an endless variation of sounds, some you can hear and some you can't hear. Tamas Bacsi taught us that there three primal sounds: the androgyne sound of long duration. The female undulating sound. And the male, broken sound or fire-sound. I try to teach people how to perceive those sounds within oneself, in others, or in the cosmos. It is important to feel harmony with oneself, with other people, with the planet and with the cosmos. One can also do this while doing various kinds of practical things. Whatever we do will contribute to make the spirit more aware of itself and of its environment.

When I sing or shamanize, I am in an imperceptible state of trance. The vibrations are very fine. Actually there is no difference between the inspiration of an artist, a businessman, a politician, or a religious person. Inspiration is a high vibration, much higher than what ordinary people have. This creative vibration is connected much more with the primal sound. That is why I teach people this primal sound in order to feel this vibration, and to use it consciously.

Vibrations work like homeopathy. It is not a medicine, but it stimulates the healing powers within us. The sound works this way. How it works I don't know. I do know that it does work. This is the difference between asking 'how' and 'what'. The philosophers ask 'what', and the technicians ask 'how'. Don't ask to the origin of things. This we have to do. Don't ask for the origin of things. The means are so easy that people say: "It can't be true." The most important wisdom is: think in a simple way. It is really like that. All great things are simple.

This the sound also teaches, and we can experience it. Being a shaman is not a title, but a state of mind. A Hungarian saying tells us: "A real pastor learns until the end of his life and he dies ignorant."

The word shaman comes from the Sumerian, and dates back about 6000 years. It was the name of the sun god Sjamas, and its priests were called Siamas, what means: in service of the light. The shaman is the one who has received the light, the knowledge and who distributes it. It is self-knowledge, knowledge of people and things. The first shamanic axiom says: "Prime important is the sound." That is the most important, the knowledge and application of sound."

One of things Tamas Bacsí taught us was to travel. He would say: "Boys and girls, come to me, in the shadow of the tree, and then we are going to travel. Gently close your eyes, or not, they will close by themselves."

Then he started to sing sounds and clap in his hands, and we had to join in and move a little. This movement was very important, because it allowed us to experience our prenatal condition, the movement of the breath of the mother. By this prenatal condition we experienced our primal state as water beings in the primal ocean, and even more, the harmony of the cosmic vibrations. Thus, we were able to find our own rhythm, and we have about a hundred rhythms inside. He didn't explain all this, we just had to join in. Only later I understood all this. He only said: "Join in and be a frog."

Then we entered a special state, and he continued. We were aware that we were under that tree, but at the same time images would come up. After half an hour to an hour he said: "Be still now, and stop singing. Now you can tell what you have seen. You have seven sources of knowledge, five senses, emotions and thoughts. Tell me what came up while you were singing. It can be a feeling or a thought, or a series of thoughts, or a sound, just tell me."

Curiously, we came into contact with various archetypal images. Of course, at that time we did not understand that. But even when you don't understand it, it will still influence you. That is why it is important that when you wake up in the morning, to remember your dreams, even if you don't understand them. When you pay attention to them, the symbols will become clear later on. This is a good thing to do because dreams bring us into a higher harmony.

Normal dreams brings us into harmony physically and psychologically. Waking dreams brings us in harmony with the psychic existence, and that was the purpose of the traveling.

He often called it a journey to the cellar. We lived in a wine area, with a lot of wine cellars. In those cellars the temperature was always the same, summer or winter, and it was important to experience this atmosphere.

In this way he was preparing us slowly, by connecting our memory with the cellar temperature and atmosphere which is dark, humid, soft and mysterious, with strange sounds and vibrations. Thus, we went together 'to the cellar', and he inquired for our perceptions. He told us that when we would grow up, we would see other images. We should not be afraid of it, because they are only images, which you experience in your thoughts. He called them presents which could bring you happiness or fear. Even fear he called it a present, because then you can feel and know what it is. He said to accept these presents, and not to push them away, even if they were fearful.

Later he took us down 'the water well'. There were wells that were about 80 meters deep. When you looked in it, you saw a small circle of reflecting water at

the bottom. He knew that the children were often playing in that area, and we were amazed by these wells. Therefore, he said: "We are going downward, into the well, very slowly, as a falling feel. Then you reach the surface of the water, and then you sink deeper, much deeper." In this way we were experiencing our prenatal condition. Usually we fell asleep, as if we were dissolving in vapor. "First you are as ice, the ice melts into water, and the water becomes vapor, which dissolves into the universe." That was his method to bring us this far. I don't know exactly what he did, but I do know that he gave all kinds of suggestions. He used our half-dream state to give us suggestions, post-suggestions, to prevent any bad to happen to us, an accident or a psychological or psychic accident.

He always warned us to do these things when you are tired or don't really want to do it; and that you have to stop when have pain, psychologically or bodily. He said: "Never force the body, soul or spirit. One person is faster or slower than the other. What counts is that you continue, that you stay in movement." Don't try to be in the same speed as your master. Your master can run ahead, so far that you can't see him anymore. This is not a hindrance, as long as you can see his footsteps and follow."

Now I know that the so-called subterranean travel is a journey into the subconsciousness. Tamas Bacsí did not tell or explain us that. He only passed on the tradition. Man has seven different levels of consciousness, and you can experience these. Going into the cellar, or into the well, is the same as going into the subconsciousness, and then you can experience this level. It is important to experience everything, even what you experience physically. If you don't put your awareness into it, you are using twice as much energy. When you are really aware of yourself, then there is energy left over. This energy I radiate, or I can use it for myself or other people.

Aside from the subconsciousness, there is the superconsciousness. Experiencing this is like being taken to heaven. Therefore, he said: "Watch the bird carefully, and feel yourself like a bird. Fly with the birds. Watch how the swallows fly, and the bats. Isn't it marvelous how they do that. Admire that and try to feel it."

Imagine that you are a cloud, a beautiful cloud, or one full with electricity or rain, a dark cloud. Let yourself float and travel, just like that cloud." In this way, we learned how flying feels. What actually happened was that he let us develop our functions to feel supernatural perceptions, and he did that in a very simple way.

2. Sound Is Primary

Tamas Bacsí was not only called upon to heal people and animals, but also to foresee the future. After the First World War, many Hungarian prisoners were left behind in Russia. People wanted to know if they were still alive, if they had died, or if they would return, and when. Their mothers and spouses often consulted Tamas Bacsí about this, 'to hear' something as he called it. He would take the women to a big tree, and old white birch that was more than a hundred years old and very beautiful. That tree was just outside the village next to a dirt road. This was the road that led into the village. It was a threefold road split with a green

spot where the tree was. He would sit under the tree and listen to the rustling of the silver leaves. We were allowed to be present, but we could not speak, we had to be silent. Then he said: "Listen very carefully, and then you can hear the leaves speak."

So, he listens to the leaves, and he posed himself a question in his mind. The person who consulted him was there too, of course. Mostly women who were interested in their husbands, or mothers, or people who were engaged. Then he grabbed the woman gently and placed her against the tree, with her back to the tree, and her face in the direction of Russia, to the East. He said: "Think about your son, your husband, or fiancée. Think about him and close your eyes, and tell me later what you have seen. I myself shall listen to the leaves and to the spirits."

Later I learned that this was a very ancient method that was also used by the druids. Even Joan of Arc said that the angels spoke to her from the leaves. Listening to the rustling of leaves, or to other sources of sound is being done in the entire world. He listened to the leaves and sang articulated sounds. We always wanted to know what he was singing. Actually they were just sounds. It was not a language. Sometimes he would say: "That is the language of the ancient Hungarians." I do think that there were some words in it, but I don't know in how far they are from a language, or were just imitations. In any case he said: "This is ancient Hungarian." or "It is the Tartars with their dog heads that speak like that."

In 1241, the tartars conquered Hungary and devastated the land badly. These were the hordes of Batoe Kalm. Since that time people call the Tartars dog heads, because they have protruding jaw bones, and they are small in stature; they have a remarkable skin and jet black hair. This made people think of dogs, also because the way they spoke resembled oriental languages, like the barking of a dog. It is remarkable that people still remembered that seven centuries later. From my own experience I know that in spite of not knowing the language one can feel the mentality of a people from its intonation and rhythm. So he said: "It is the language of ancient Hungarians, or of the tartars with the dog heads." He was sitting under the tree in an oriental fashion. Not in a lotus position, but the way the Turks sit, without making a ritual of it. He simply sat there and sang. From time to time he stopped singing and listened. After half an hour to an hour, he would tell if the man would not come home, if he was dead, or if he was married with somebody else over there. Or, that they had to wait a couple of weeks, and he would come home with this or that holiday.

He never gave a precise date, only about a certain time. I understand that, because there are no direct connections. I personally have seen the person come home at the time given. With Pentecost, Easter, during a potato harvest, or the plucking of prunes. Tamas Bacsi had a farm mentality regarding time. Time was indicated by the different feasts and harvests. That often happened.

I also remember a pig herder who took the pigs of the entire village into the woods or meadows. He took them for the entire day, but by the evening all the animals found their way back to their own farm by themselves. One day, a terrible storm happened, and a lot of animals were frightened and ran away,

among them a sow with piglets which ran the other way, in the direction of the Donau. After the storm, people went looking for the animal, but they couldn't find it. They started to suspect that the gypsies, who were living at the edge of the village, had eaten it. But they first wanted to consult Tamas Bacsi.

Thus, with a chicken under the arm, they marched to Tamas Bacsi. They offered him the chicken and asked what happened. If the gypsies had roasted the animal, or could he find where the animal was. Tamas went to the white birch, followed by tens of people, because it had never happened that he had been consulted for such a matter, and thus it was worthwhile to see how the Old One would solve this.

He was sitting quietly under the tree, and did not chase away anybody. The people were also very quiet and were watching what he was doing. He didn't do anything spectacular. He took the owner of the pig and placed her under the tree, her back to the tree, looking towards the direction the pig had disappeared. She had to close her eyes, and think about the animal. When an image would come up she had to tell him. He himself listened to the rustling of the leaves, and at a certain moment he said that the animal, the sow and the piglets were not lost, were not in the stomach of the gypsies, but they were in the swamps of the Donau. He urged them to quickly go get them, because close by there were gypsies fishing, and if they would find the animals, it would be too late. This was indeed the case.

He was also consulted to make weather forecasts. At time there were no weather forecasts, and for a farmer this was important. Close to that white birch there was a pond he often went to at sunset to listen to the frogs, or as he would say: "to speak with the ancestors." This way he gave his weather forecasts. At that time I didn't understand it, but now I think the frogs are able to sense the oncoming weather. He was able to listen to their sounds and distinguish the different tonalities, and from these he was able to forecast the weather. He always told us: "You have to listen very careful to the frogs, because they know everything that happens in the three elements, earth, water and air, but they don't know anything about fire. Only the salamander knows about that." in any case, the frogs were a kind of barometer for him, giving him information about what was happening on earth, also inside the earth. This is so because the frog is amphibian. It is an ancient method to get information out of the singing and sounds of the frog.

Sometimes we also watched the birds, especially three kinds of birds: the crows, the magpies, and at night the owls. In that region there were a lot of owls. He also observed the flying of the bat, and the stark, and the swallows. In the spring and in the fall, many wild ducks and geese flew over and landed in the ponds or fields. He observed these too for different reasons. The wild geese always came in the fall from the north where also the ancient Hungarian people came from. That is why it was said that they carried with them messages from our ancestors. He then listened to them, or looked to what kind of formation they were flying. When they returned in spring, they were going back to their ancestors, This way people kept their connection with them.

Tamas Bacsi also used magic signs to look at, to hear, to experience or to heal,

like the impression of the foot of a wild duck. This forms three lines like the sign for Shiva, or of Neptune. This shows up a lot in shamanic iconography. Now, I know from books that this was used everywhere. There is a theory that says that the cuneiform of the Assyro-Babylonians, and the Sumerians might be founded on the impression of the foot of a wild duck. In the beginning there were hundreds of variations, but later this was reduced to dozens, from which the writing originated.

Tamas Bacsi made an impression with his thumb, index finger and middle finger spread out into the dirt, into earth or clay. He did that in different ways, and then he looked at it. I don't know if it was a mnemonic way to remember something, or that the lines caused a shifting of his consciousness, or something the like.

I notice myself that when I paint or draw that my consciousness shifts.

Something happens, it is a rather peculiar sensation. It is physical, psychological and psychical; and a whole different way of thinking arises. One can make

endless variations with these three lines of the impression of the foot of a goose.

Tamas Bacsi regarded it as a trinity. He said: "It is day, night and what is in between." It was also the trinity of the three worlds: the world of the living, the world of the deceased, and the world of those who are waiting to be born.

In northern shamanism, in the area of Mongolia, they also know the existence of the three worlds, as with the Aborigines in Australia. Sometimes the trinity has another form: the world of the living here on earth, the subterranean realm, and the world of the spirits. It is believed that the spirit is immortal and that those who still have to come, who are in 'becoming', are waiting for a body to incarnate.

That gesture with the three stretched out fingers, he also used this to heal cows and horses. It didn't work with pigs, and little better with sheep. The reason for this might be that cows and horses were present a lot with the original Hungarian nomads, while sheep were more present with mountain dwellers.

This points to Tamas Bacsi having a genetic link with the old shamanism of the nomads. Shamanism can take form in many different aspects depending on the area and the mentality. However, it is always experienced from the same state of mind.

He laid the three fingers of his hand on people and animals, on the painful area, but also on chakras or energy centers. He did this very deliberately. For example, with the throat, the fifth chakra, he would lay the fingers in three different ways, depending on the way the man, woman or child was coughing. He first listened and then laid his fingers in the pit of the throat, on the Adam's Apple, or on the glands.

At that time tuberculosis was the national disease of which one in ten people died. Pamphlets told people to be more hygienic. Tamas Bacsi worked on a lot of people with tuberculosis. He distinguished three types of cough: wet, dry and heat. A hot cough is a cough that is an asthmatic cough that is very high in the throat.

He touched the throat chakra in different ways according to the nature of the cough. This demanded not only sensitivity but also knowledge. One can go solely by feel, but he also relied on passed-on knowledge.

He didn't explain me this at length because I was only a boy, and I had to go to Budapest to school. Maybe he would have done it if I had stayed in Solt longer. When I returned during the months of vacation, then there was always a lot of work on the fields. By nature, he was a quiet person, who smoked his pipe and listened to people.

He worked on the chakras not only with the three fingers but also with the five fingers of his right hand, with fingers spread out. Thus, he put his hand on the heart, and then he began to rotate his hand slowly. Very slowly. This was not a massage. He barely touched the body. With his left he worked on the chakra behind the body, on the back of the person between the shoulder blades. Sometimes he pushed on it, and the patients then sighed. It was painful, and subsequently they relaxed. Usually he turned in the direction of the sun, but sometimes in the other direction. Sometimes he had the patient sit against a tree, but on a bench. Next to him, or in front of him. I don't know why, maybe it had a psychological meaning.

He asked those people to close their eyes, but not fall asleep. Because they had had to be careful to notice what images would come up in their mind, as the ancestors or benevolent spirits would give them advice. Then they told him what they had seen, for example, a sunrise on a field. In most cases these were images from every day life. Now I understand why people get images of what they usually do. An engineer might get images of machine parts. One can derive from that which what one is occupied. The images were not alarming visions of angels or devils; in any case not immediately. Sometimes somebody would tell him that he saw a child or animal drowning, and more archetypical images would come up, because these were images of something that he had never experienced before. The first images are usually of every day life. When one probes deeper into the problem, more archetypical images come up. This is the same with everybody.

Then Tamas Bacsi asked them to describe the images and feelings. When he felt that the other person was getting or telling a message he stopped his own meditation. He let the person tell his waking dream and asked: "What were you thinking before you this dream?" He always related the dream image to the practical situation of the person. A dream image can have different meanings, and you have to know with what to connect the images .

I don't know if he had discovered that on his own, or gotten it from tradition. In shamanic tradition it is clearly expressed to observe to the galloping thoughts, but not to interfere. "Let it arise." It is also a shamanic tradition to consult dreams, waking dreams or free association. It doesn't matter how you call it, this was the way he worked on people. Sometimes he explained their dreams: "I am seeing it this way. Are you pleased with my answer." He never said "It is this way.", but "This is the way I see it." The other replied: "Yes, I agree, but about this or that issue I think differently." Then Tamas Bacsi said "What do you think about that?"

He provoked that, it was a psychological push to let the other talk, and he would be happy with nodding his head. Once in a while he said "Yes." or "mmm", or sometimes he interrupted to ask another question. It was a kind of psycho-

analysis but with a couch. The patient was seated on a chair or on the hard ground, usually on the grass outside. He was not disturbed at all by other people or animals around, or playing and noisy children. Nor him nor the patient was disturbed by all this. In such a situation one was able to disconnect from all these distractions and noise, and concentrate completely on what was happening between him and the patient.

I already told you about his method to know things by studying the sounds and behavior of animals. Crows were very important, their way of flying, and especially their sounds, their 'singing'. This already existed with the ancient Germanic people who attributed the crow to Odin; and in other parts of the world. The crow was also important with the North American Indians. The ancient Romans had special priests who listened to messages from the sounds of birds. Tamas Bacsi was able to distinguish 64 different tonalities in the sounds of the crows.

This is a language, and shamans explain it. Not the higher, spiritual things, but general, practical things, like, if there are people who are coming from the mountains, or what weather is coming.

I know that in shamanism the figure eight is very important, also as a graphic representation. It consists of two eggs, two ovals, the human and the divine, the earthly and the heavenly, connected together. It is remarkable that the crows have 64 tonalities, because $64=8 \times 8$. This means that numbers also a cosmic meaning, and shamans used them as such.

For example, Tamas Bacsi counted the amount of clattering of a stark. When a stark feels happy, he dances on his nest, and clappers with his beak. Sometimes slowly, but most of the time very quickly, six to eight times a second. You have to have a real good hearing. He told us: "The stark is telling what he has seen." he advised us to count the clapping. You can see when the stark will start this. He stands up, looks right and left, and when he has the space, he starts. Tamas Bacsi said: "Look, he is going to clapper. Count how many times he does that." We rarely got it right. He counted with us and corrected us. "No, that was two less, or four more. Next time you have to pay more attention."

This caused us to develop a quick reflex and reaction, and this contributed to our expansion of consciousness. People often think that expansion of consciousness is metaphysical, but it starts with very simple and practical things like listening to a stark, or even to an idling motor.

What is even more difficult is the sound swallows make when they fly back to the nest with insects in their beak. This is much faster than the clapping of the stark; it is about 8 to 14 times a second. You had to do this in a way that you get the total image at once. He said: "If you count 1,2,3 then you will never get it. You have to discover the rhythm. Every rhythm has that much or this many sounds." I do the same in a shamanization. When a mantra presents itself, or when I hear people speak, I listen to the rhythm. Not the amount of sounds, but the rhythm. Tamas Bacsi gave us these exercises, like listening to the frogs. Later he went much further. When it was quiet in the evening, we would go sit next to the pond, and there were an awful lot of mosquitoes. He said: "Count the humming of the mosquitoes." and "The mosquitoes are your teacher. They teach you how to sing."

Sing like a mosquito and experience this with your whole body." His whole body was his instrument, and we had to do the same with ours.

With the owl we also had to count. Here he made us pay attention to two things, rhythm and tonality, the musicality or that it was long or short. "Ask the owls something," he said, "then you will hear what he answers." Of course, we asked very silly questions: if we were going to eat something tasty, or if father would bring a present from the city. If the owl made four sounds it would happen. That was very simple: an even number was positive, an uneven number was negative or you had to wait.

We were not able to interpret the sound. Sometimes he listened to know something about the coming weather, or the answer to a question. For example, when a woman wanted to know if her baby would be a girl or boy. In this way he also listened to the swallows and the storks. He always had different references and in most cases it came true.

He concentrated on the sound, and that brought about a shift in consciousness. Later I noticed that the phenomenon happens when listening to the humming of a motor or a car. It is not that important where the sound comes from. From listening carefully a shift of consciousness happens, and at the same time the three-dimensional reality does not have to disappear. It is not a slumber state during which you could get accidents, but you are present at two levels.

I experience that often. I sit in the train and listen to the sounds of the wheels on the rails. When I concentrate on this I notice a shift in consciousness. That is not a slumber, but a state between waking and sleeping, and in this state perceptions arise. In this state you can get messages or answers, or you feel yourself functioning on a larger scale. The shamans know that not the sound but the vibration makes the shift in consciousness. It doesn't matter if that sound is from a stork, or motor cycle. If one connects with the vibration, then the result is the same.

3. Initiation

When I knew Tamas Bacsí he was already more than 70 years old, but he was still very active. He was working as a shamanizing until he was 90. Then he suddenly died, within two days. That went quick.

One of his favorite pastimes was horse-trading. In that time it was the custom to organize horse markets and fairs on a regular basis, especially in the larger villages and cities. In Hungary the villages are far away from each other. Usually you can't even see the church steeple from the other village. The reason for this is that in the 16th and 17th century the Turks destroyed everything, and killed a large percentage of the population, by which large areas were depopulated.

Like every other shaman, Tamas Bacsí was very familiar with the soul of animals, especially the horse. The horse is a typical shamanistic animal. We even find it in Greek mythology, which knew the centaurs, half horse half animal. Actually this was a reference to the Scythians, a nomadic people that is related to the Hungarian people, and which was strongly connected with the horse. It goes back really far.

The shamans were also horse tamers. They not only knew the soul of horses, but they also traveled a lot on horses. This is one of the characteristics of shamans: they traveled a lot around the country to gain knowledge or to heal people. This tradition is very old.

Tamas Bacsi continued this tradition. He traveled a lot and traded horses on the horse markets. He didn't do this for money, but because he loved horses, and in this way he could be with and work with horses. It also happened that other people entrusted him horses to sell them, or to buy one for them because of his familiarity with horses.

He took me on one of those travels. I was about seven years old. It was in the beginning of the fall, just before school started, so that must have been the end of August. He was going to a market with his horse wagon, pulled by one horse. The horses he was selling were behind the wagon. During this journey special happenings took place. I was in the back of the horse wagon, under the hood, with a horse blanket over me. I experienced my first initiation during which I was completely outside myself. Later I understood that it was an initiation that Tamas Bacsi had created in me, but it isn't clear to me how he had accomplished it. He was always singing, even when he was alone, without words, in an incomprehensible way. It sounded like a language but it wasn't. Just sounds, rhythmically articulated and guttural sounds. He sang me asleep. The rhythm of the wagon and the smell of horses also created a natural atmosphere which made me go into this second state. The second state is the state between waking and sleeping, a sort of half slumbering, or dozing that can take hours.

Later I understood it was an initiation journey. While I was slumbering I felt myself leaving my body, a very special state known in shamanism all over the world, and what is also used in magical and mystical rituals. Thus, I was brought in this half-way state, and my senses became much more sensitive to supernatural impressions. Shamanism teaches us that there are seven sources of knowledge, five senses, emotions and thoughts. From these seven sources all kinds of perceptions were made. One does need a special sensory organ for that. All usual senses become more sensitive. Like a telescope which works much better high up on a mountain top than in the polluted air of a city with its dark vapors.

People often speak of supernatural perception, but generally this does not exist. The seven senses have sufficient capacity to perceive a lot more than is usually the case, although there are other senses. From experience, I know that there is an eighth and a ninth sense. I can't speak of more senses because I haven't experienced these. Tamas Bacsi spoke of thirteen senses, because he had experienced these. I do know that there are more from my own experience. I do not have the abilities of these other senses, but I have had short impressions or flashes of these, and I have counted up to seventeen.

On the way to the fair I have made a real cosmic voyage, a macro-cosmic and micro-cosmic voyage at the same time. I traveled to the heavens of the stars, and I experienced the mechanism of material structure. I didn't meet another person or supernatural being over there, but I experienced the structure of the material universe. The structure is not the content. One cannot know the content

when one does not know the structure. I experienced the mathematical structure of the macro-cosmos and the micro-cosmos. These were mathematical figures of fabrics and lines which you haven't seen before. That was not Euclidean mathematics. This was totally different. They moved about, they were alive. One transformed into the other. The different mathematical figures were space and time at the same time. I felt space, time and light, the white light. That I have experienced. At that time I didn't know what was happening, but it not necessary that one knows; it happens by itself.

Since then, I was thinking differently from everyone else. That has caused me a lot of trouble, because I didn't have the same thought structure as before. When I went back to Budapest, they even sent me to a psychiatric institute because I was not normal. I didn't have the same thought and emotional structure as the other students.

In that time period, the 1930s, psycho-analysis was rising in Hungary, and the head of the institute was a student of Sigmund Freud. His name was Ferenczi. I stayed there a couple of weeks for observation. Later my mother told me that they had given her a letter to take to my school. When my mother came to pick me up, a professor of the institute told her "Be gentle with that boy, he is a genius." But they didn't tell her in what I was a genius. My mother told me that in 1968, and they also said: "Let the boy do and think what he wants."

I had the habit of getting up at night, around three o'clock. I felt completely refreshed. I dressed myself, and I walked through the empty streets to the park, or I crossed the Donau bridge and walked up the Gellert hill. This hill is named after the holy man Saint Gellert, who had converted with flaming sword, the Hungarian people to Christianity.



Gellert Hill, next to the Donau river

I walked up the hill, which is 235 meters high, and I was just sitting there looking around.

At home, I had my own sleeping room, and I went out of the house by the window in order not to be noticed. But one day they must have noticed that I was not home at night. They were so frightened, and asked what I was doing there on top of the hill. I answered that I climbed to hill to sit there. "But why are you doing that?" my parents asked. They couldn't understand it why a boy would get up at three o'clock at night, and when he comes back he is not tired, and even goes to school for the entire day.

I said: "I expect something will happen, and that is the reason I am going there." Of course, all the way up there I had a beautiful view of the Donau. I was looking at the waves, the little babbling waves, and that brought me into a hypnotic state. My teacher had told me that, to look at the waves. There were a couple of ponds close to our village, not that big, about 200 to 300 meters long. We often stayed there in the evenings with Tamas Bacsi, and then we watched the stars or the clouds on the surface of the water, not looking up. He taught us to look at everything as being a reflection, and that brought me in a special state.

Now I know that you bring about a wider state of perception by this method. At that time, I was just sitting there, and at dawn I was looking at the small waves of the Donau, or listening to the rustling of the leaves. It is very important to open yourself this way, to widen your attention. Sometimes they give you various exercises, but it is easier to concentrate on only one thing, something that is alive, like undulating water and the rustling of leaves, something that is in movement. It is characteristic for a shaman to join the eternal cycle to widen his consciousness.

There I was, in expectancy. I expected that something would happen. But I have to say, nothing happened. What I didn't notice at that time is that the expansion of consciousness happened. That was the real surprise. This expansion of consciousness that came over me was an unnoticed education, because they didn't teach me to do it this way or that way. Tamas Bacsi only made it aware, and I developed it myself.

When I was at school, I was often reading a book instead of playing soccer. Or I sat in the corner of the playground and watched the dust particles dancing in the sunlight. The playground was not paved, it was of a dirt surface. Especially during the summer I was watching the dirt particles vibrate in the sunlight. I enjoyed looking at them.

Or I looked at the clouds, how they crossed each other, or penetrated each other. At that age it was unusual for a child and that is why the professor from the institute said to my mother: "Take it calm with him. Let him do; he is not dangerous, not to himself, not to other people, because he is a genius." This is literally what my mother told me later, and she began to cry when she told me. Because it was something extraordinary, like a meteorite or so. Unfortunately my mother didn't think of asking: "What is he a genius in?" They didn't tell her that. Now I can think logically about it, and that was not a genius in something specific, but more a multiplicity of things, whatever that could be.

After the war, when I went back to Hungary, I tried to get the files of the institute that they made of me during the years 1930-1931 through the mediation of my mother's doctor. He inquired, but found that the part of the institute, that contained the documents, burned down during the war, and nothing remained. It is a pity, because I would have liked to know what they had written about me. I am telling all this because of my initiation in the horse wagon at night on our way to the market. I saw structures that were always in movement, as transparent crystals, but finer as if they were made of light, crystals that had become light. I saw a great number of dimensions which were penetrating each other, and also the white light, white on white. The intensity of the white light was so different! To image this, take a milk bottle with narrow neck, and hold it upside down until it flows out. This creates all kinds of white crystal structures inside the bottle, like a honeycomb, like soap bubbles. Tamas Bacsi showed us this and said: "This is what the universe looks like." he always said: "The universe is full of holes." His vocabulary was limited and didn't include mathematical structures. Tamas Bacsi has seen it himself. He said: "Everything that is around you, the cow

or your hand, all of it is full of holes." It is the multidimensionality of the universe, in the sense that everything has structure and openings. He showed it to us with the milk bottle too. He said: "Also look at the air, and then you can see the holes. Then you can go through these holes into another space, another existence."

Shamans were primitive people, but they perceived the multidimensionality that science can only suspect mathematically. They even went into it.

The shamans found that you can travel into it. That is the real travel. This was the same as looking at the dust particles on the school yard. Tamas Bacsi used to do this too. He would take a handful of dirt, throw it into the air by which the dust particles vibrated in the sunlight. "Look," he said. "These little points you can see, are openings, and you can go through these openings. ." This was a didactic example, but at the same time a meditation. When you look at the air long enough, then you can see its atom parts.

That I have perceived myself for the first time in 1960-1961, thirty years later! I had been doing this exercise for many years, but the perception only happened then. Thus, never let your courage fail; spirituality is hard work.

This happened in Belgium. I was working in the city of Charleroi, in a metallurgy company where I was supervisor of the blast furnaces. I was responsible for about 300 tons of iron ore. For this, I had gone to a technical school for two years. One day I entered the control room, and suddenly I was seeing a multitude of fine points in the air, microscopic little points. I was seeing them so clear as if something had been removed from my eyes, and suddenly I could see. The points were blue, green, orange, yellow and red, actually the colors of the rainbow.

There were two or three others colors two among which was purple.

I was thinking that it had to come from somewhere, and I was looking for a colored window. I was thinking about it in a very realistic way. I didn't find it, and when I opened the door and looked outside, I was still seeing it. I went outside, made a tour around the blast furnaces, went back inside, and I was still seeing it. Then I went back outside again, and looked at the sky and saw it in the sky too, not just in the room. Then it dawned to me, as Tamas Bacsi had said: "look at the vibrating dust, in the sun light, and then you will see the holes, the colored holes." Thirty years later I was seeing it, at a moment I was not expecting it, and under the most profane circumstances. I am telling this to make clear what that initiation was all about, the experience of the multidimensionality on micro-cosmic and macro-cosmic level.

In regard to this initiation I had to mention something that happened years earlier, when I was about five and a half years old. I was playing outside with the village children, and we were making a lot of noise. A farmer had already warned us a couple of times: "Don't make such a noise, my wife is sick in bed." Then we were quiet for a couple of minutes, but the noise started again, because we played 'bandit'.

The farmer had already warned us two or three times, and each time he was more angry. Suddenly he appeared with a big stick that was used to hold up the vine branches. With big force he threw it at us and the stick hit my head. It was a heavy stick thrown with a lot of force, and I immediately lost consciousness. I don't remember what happened next, but my mother told me that I was between

life and death for weeks. The stick had hit me in such a way, that my breathing has hindered and there was the risk of suffocation. The function of breathing in the brain was not damaged but it didn't function well. I had a severe concussion. I fell unconscious, and during the entire time I was living in white light. I was traveling in white light. These were the same elements I experienced during my initiation, but this time I went through it. With my initiation I was looking at it, from a distance. I wasn't going, I was just looking. When I was unconscious, I went through it as through a white vapor. I felt myself as vapor, and I received impressions of forces, as if I was moving through electromagnetic fields. I really enjoyed it. I experienced myself timeless, spaceless, and as consciousness. In other words, I had another consciousness, a consciousness that was all knowing. This is the way I experienced that.

Later, my mother told me that the village doctor was unable to help. He did not allow me to be transported to the city, because at that time there were only horse wagons and the constant bumping of the wagon on the road would have killed me. The only thing my mother did was put ice packs on my head.

Only much later did I see the connection between the two events. It is known that a concussion can bring you to another level of consciousness, and the shamans used that in a deliberate way. Sometimes they hit their skulls softly to create an expansion of consciousness. This is a restructuring of the brain, the brain cells, and the neurons. Shamans would never explain it like this, and he actually does not for sure what happens, but he does know that something positive happens when he does this. He knows the result.

He hit his head with the back of his hand at five spots on the skull: at the back, at the spot of the primal brain, the little brain, then at the right temple, on the forehead, and the left temple. Then he changes his hand. He spreads the five fingers, bend them a little, and thus he hit the crown on the fontanel. Thus, one hits thirteen times, three times four plus one, and the thirteenth is stronger. One hits so hard that one feels a slight tingling, and this way one hits the five spots. Now I know that thirteen is the number of the master, like the twelve apostles and the thirteenth is Jesus; or the twelve signs of the zodiac and the thirteenth is the sun, the king. That is in every culture. This points to the four elements, earth, water, air, fire, and the three polarities, positive, negative and neutral. Three times four is twelve plus the thirteenth which is life itself that vivifies everything. This is the master who knows everything and can act. Therefore, thirteen is a holy number.

The shaman provokes these vibrations in his brain as a light concussion. That one always has to do for oneself, because nobody else can feel how hard he can hit. It also depends on the time of day. You have to feel that it hurts a little, but when the pain becomes sharper, like a burning ray, then you have to stop immediately and wait for a couple of days in order to prevent accidents. Tamas Bacsí warned us for that.

He also showed us what can happen when one exaggerates. In the village there was a seventeen-year boy, the son of a bell maker. He had been studying with Tamas Bacsí in the past, and knew this method because he was born with a caul. He thought that the Old One is doing it too slowly, he is old and therefore he is

way too careful. He started hitting harder, and when the radiating pain came up he continued anyway, and he ended up with irreversible brain damage. He began to stutter. When he was ten or twelve years old. It was so terrible, and nothing could be done about it.

There was another person of about forty years old and married. He also has been with Tamas Bacsi. He also has exaggerated and had become temporarily blind. At a certain moment he didn't see anything anymore, and nothing could be done about it either. Tamas Bacsi often said: "Look at Peter and Balins, don't you exaggerate."

During that initiation I was constantly in a sound state. Sound characterizes this multidimensionality. The primal sound, which is a single sound that consists of hundreds of sounds fused together. That happens when one pays attention to the sound. The composer Robert Schumann expressed it this way: "The air is full of music." That I have experienced, and I am convinced that Tamas Bacsi intentionally caused this to happen in me. I don't know how he did this. He sang monotone guttural sounds, that was it. He didn't give anything special to drink. I remember that at a certain moment he called me: "Josika. Josika." which is a diminutive of Joska. I slowly opened my eyes, and saw some faint stars in the sky. It was dawn already but some faint stars were still visible. It was as if I came back from the stars. I had the feeling that I just had been born.

Later I understood that this is the prenatal state. The embryo is still connected by two-thirds with the multidimensionality, but when the heart forms and starts beating, it loses another third. The embryo becomes more human, more material. When the child is born he loses the connection completely.

You can find it back as a memory, but the direct contact is gone. That has to be restored. It is important to experience the prenatal state again, not just the impulses one gets from the mother's body, but entirely different thought structures. Then one experiences the sphericity, the metaphysical condition. You don't have to believe that. I don't believe it, I am convinced of it. I have experienced it. That was the meaning of that initiation. It all felt so unreal; my body felt so strange. In comparison to what I had experienced, my body felt almost lifeless and rigid.

This journey with Tamas Bacsi is the most marked memory in relation to him. I remember that they were holding a secret meeting in a big tent. These were the wise men, the tudos emberek. Some of them were from Transylvania, the ancient Hungary, others were from Bulgaria and from Bosnia. These were the Bogomils. Now, when I see images of Bogomils, they remind me of the men who were there. They had come by foot with their herds to the fair, and had walked hundreds of kilometers. There was also an old gypsy.

They met inside a tent, eight men, of which the youngest was forty years old, but there were also boys of twelve and fourteen years old, their students. They didn't know each others' language, and Tamas Bacsi only spoke Hungarian. When he made it clear that they wanted to continue their journey, Tamas Bacsi took a string out of his pocket and tied it to his fingers. It was like the string game that children play. He made a certain form, and showed with his fingers three spots on the strings, and this way he showed them the shortest route. This was not the

main road, but little side roads, and they understood that. They used the string game to find their way in space.

I also remember that my grandfather had a deaf servant who has very strong, like a bull. He was a hard worker, but he didn't like to work on the fields with the other people. Therefore, my grandfather sent him to work on remote fields or vineyards, so he could work alone. My grandfather also use the string game to show him where to go work, and he understood that.

The string game was very practical and there are tens of thousands of forms. At the end of last century they said that an anthropologist is characterized by a string in his pocket, because at that time it was fashion to collect as many forms of the string game as possible. This way they tried to find the original culture from where it came, but of course, they didn't find it.

In any case, there are thousands of forms everywhere, from the Atlantic ocean to Alaska. In Stockholm there is a large collection of string forms which were used by the Eskimos. They used to think it was just a game to pass time, but it was also used for other purposes, to find one's position in space.

It was also used as a mnemonic technique, to remember the heritage of people, gods or spirits. In the area of the Pacific, boys needed to remember by heart the names of all ancestors, sometimes about twenty, thirty generations. Not only their names but also what they had done. They learned this by means of the string game. The mathematical and abstract tattoos and paintings, like in Africa, are nothing else but mnemonic techniques. When one knew more about their ancestors, one also profited from their powers, from their genetic past. In shamanism, they also honor their ancestors, they knew their names and called upon them for consultation.

But there is a third element that they haven't studied yet: the structure of thought. Because the forms of the strings are thought structures, like yantras in the Indian culture. One made a certain figure and then one looked at it. They didn't know what it meant, and they looked at it until images came up, and then they knew what it was. They were thinking in a whole different way, and they could make travels, they could experience the prenatal condition. In their thoughts they could liberate themselves from time and space. By this game one can restructure the neurons in the brain. We know that the environment changes our state of mind, but the reverse is true too. Our state of mind changes our environment. Our brain also changes, as does our way of thinking.

From that meeting I remember that they were sitting together, drank some wine and sang. That was just regular red wine, and they smoked pipe. What was in the pipe I don't know. Maybe aromatic herbs, because they were always present in the tobacco for pipe. I suspect they might have exchanged some plants and mushrooms. I remember a real big mountain person who had made a tobacco bag from cat skin. That was soft skin. At a certain moment, he was looking for something at the bottom of the bag, removed it and held it up. I couldn't see it well enough to know what it was because all those other men were around him looking at it.

They were sitting in a circle and sang guttural sounds. I don't remember how long that lasted because at a certain moment I fell asleep. I had drunk one glass of

wine, to which I had the right to drink, and then I fell asleep. The others drank more of course. From all the children, who were twelve, thirteen years old, I was the youngest. I remember that I was suddenly awakened, and they said: "Come we are going back." It was already evening when we returned. We took the entire night to get home.

They were singing for two reasons: for themselves and for the others, the world. Now I know that the sound can have a magical and mystical, but also a practical purpose. They sang themselves into a special state of mind. If they used herbs or mushrooms for this purpose I don't know. I did see that they did something secretly, that we, boys, were not allowed to see. The singing brought them into a special state of mind; that was the most important ritual.

In regard to the use of consciousness expanding means, another memory surfaces. I am seeing the old cemetery, the protestant cemetery, with the totem poles. The Hungarian protestants used the ancient pagan totem poles. Because the Catholics had crosses, the protestants wanted to distinguish themselves from the Catholics by using the ancient totem poles of the pagan religion on their graves. Actually these are the guardian spirits of the deceased, or sometimes the deceased themselves.

One day I was walking with him at the more than two hundred year old cemetery, when from the other side a gypsy was approaches us. In Hungary there two kinds of gypsies: some of them have a permanent residence in the cities, and the others travel around and trade in horses, while their wives are fortune-tellers. I still can see the gypsy before me. He was wearing a black wide hat, those were traveling gypsies, the Romani. He was speaking a little Hungarian, and he was looking for Tamas Bacsi. Somebody must have sent him here and given him a description of Tamas Bacsi. When he arrived at the cemetery he recognized him immediately, and asked him if he was Tamas Bacsi. He said that he had some herbs from the mountains.

He had a pouch which he opened, and he showed the contents to Tamas to smell. Tamas took it into his hand, smelled it and said: "Yes, these are the real herbs, these are good." The gypsy wanted to sell it to him, and I remember that he was really persistent. Tamas Bacsi always smoked pipe, but when didn't smoke, he was chewing tobacco. When the gypsy persisted, Tamas said that he despised anyone who was using these herbs to enter into an expansion of consciousness because "Those people are too lazy to work on themselves. They resort to artificial means instead of taking the time and effort. Thus, they are lazy. They are not worthy, because they want to reap without making an effort." he turned his head and spit out his chewing tobacco as a sign of contempt. He didn't want to have anything to do with it. But after a little pause he gave him the name of another person and said: "Go to him." Tamas himself never used it.

I have had several initiations. Actually they were more like tests to see what abilities I had and to what extent.

When I was twelve years old, I was staying for a summer vacation in Solt. On a warm day of July, Tamas Bacsi told me to go to a pond. Near the village were

several ponds, the result of clay dug up to construct houses. The ponds were about a hundred meters wide and three hundred meters long. The depth depended on the rain fall and the season.

He told me: "Go to the pond Kopoia." The word kopoja stems from the Hungarian Koponya, which is the popular expression for a skull. The pond had more or less the form of a skull. I had to go to that pond and find him a horse skull, and bring it to him.

I asked him where exactly I would find it. The water was not that deep, but when you went in it, you sank into the mud up to your knees, and the water became muddied. He said that I had to find that out for myself. He did say to go stand in the middle of the pond and to enter into contact with the water and feel that way where the skull was. I did that, but every time I moved the water turned gray, and I couldn't use my ordinary senses. I let myself be guided by my feelings. I found an old bucket deep in the mud. Like a radar I was being attracted by objects. The strange thing was that I first was attracted to iron objects.

Then I found a reed basket, that was a little more alive. I tried to stand still to let the mud settle, so I could see something that looked like a skull in a little more clear water.

Suddenly I felt I had to go to the left, and I tried to concentrate on the object, in order for grabbing it in one swoop, because I couldn't go through all the mud at the bottom. I reached down and I felt something sharp, and when I pulled I felt that it was buried deep in the mud. The horse skull must have been there for many years, because it was sticking out of the mud for only two fingers.

All that searching lasted for about forty minutes. I proudly brought the skull to Tamas Bacsi. He was under a tree, and I put the skull in front of his feet. The only thing he said was "mmmm"

Later he told me that it was a test to see if I could get into contact with objects. It was part of a series of happenings that comprised my initiation. At that time I became aware that I had abilities that actually I always had, and which a lot of people have. Looking for that skull was a means to waken my ability, and to actually do it, by thinking at what I was looking for and by this making contact with the object.

You can also see that with collectors who often find something that has value to them in an unexpected way. Also, most famous antiquarians know that they have a lucky hand in buying or selling. These abilities are present in man, and in shamanism they are called upon for specific purposes.

In my case it was also a totem animal, the horse. Even in the 11th and 12th century shaman were still offering white horses, and the Hungarian king Stephan the Holy One made an end to the practice with great effort. The skull of a horse was an archetypical image for the entire popular culture which held a shamanic tradition.

In the same period, my teacher sent me to find a red brick at the east side of a hill about four kilometers from our village. In the course of history there was a watch tower on the hill, and in the 16th century the Turks had built a fort, that had been leveled afterward, and the farmers now had their fields there. From time to time they unearthed bricks or pieces of iron. These were red or white

bricks. The white bricks were from the time of the Romans who also had a fort over there.

I had to find a red brick, and not a small piece. A big piece, a half or a whole brick, probably because the Turks were also a shamanistic people who were related to the Hungarians.

I went to look for it, and it wasn't easy to find a brick with all the bushes around. Within an hour I found a good piece, a half brick, and I brought it to him. As usual, he only said: "mmmm", by way of acceptance. Now I know that the purpose was to attune myself to the connection with the Turkish people, and this allowed me to experience my ability to do this. It also strengthened my self-confidence, and my self-respect that I was able to succeed in such a task.

Another time, in the same year, Tamas Bacsi told me: "Tonight you are going to sleep in the cemetery with the other children." It was a warm evening in August, and the sun was setting. That night the moon was full. First I thought that it was a joke, and I told him that my grandparents were expecting me that evening. He said: "It doesn't matter, I will tell them that you are gone somewhere."

That was the more than one hundred year old cemetery of the Catholics. Two thirds of the village was protestant, and one third was Catholic. He said: "Go to the oldest part of the cemetery, and find a place that you like or that attracts you, or that you fear; one or both. Go sleep there, and in the morning at sunrise you come to me end tell me what you have dreamed or experienced. Don't be afraid of ghosts or phantoms, because they do not exist. But in case you meet anybody, a spirit or phantom, then ask him nicely what he wants, and how you can serve him. That is the best way to please these rising spirits."

I knew the cemetery well, because it wouldn't have been the first time that I was there. Being a child, we often played hide-and-seek in that place, and I knew all kinds of pleasant and less pleasant spots. There was a grave of an old woman, a certain Barbara, that always spooked me; also a grave of a young countess who had died when she was 8 or 10 years old. There was pyramid shaped grave that you also find in England from the previous century, that I liked. But I always felt connected with the girl, and sometimes I imagined what she looked like.

That spot was attractive to me, to spend the night. Next to the grave was a wooden bell tower, with one bell in it. Sometimes we played with the bell, until the guard showed up telling us that we could not do this, because the bell could only be run when there was burial ceremony. That bell also attracted me, and I made a connection between the girl and the bell.

Tamas Bacsi gave me three big pears. "To grab onto something." So, I went over there, accompanied by three boys and a girl, having a horse blanket under my arm. First I sat at the grave of Barbara, but I didn't feel well over there. I continued to have the feeling to be sucked into the depths of a swamp. After a while I went to the grave of the young countess, and there I fell asleep. From time to time I woke up from strange dreams of a heavy thunderstorm. The clouds in my dream were as two fighting bulls causing thunder and lightning, as it is told in Hungarian tales.

However, when I suddenly woke up, I was seeing the stars and a full moon. At that time I didn't know that the bull also is a totem animal with shamans. When

two shamans are fighting for their privileges, they would fight each other dressed as wild horses or as bulls. An ancient Hungarian saying even talks about 'bull heads of the shamans' when it thunders.

I went back to sleep, and then 'white' dreams followed, just like I had when I went to the fair with Tamas Bacsi, and I fell asleep in the horse wagon. Now I dreamed that I was enclosed by glass, crystal or ice, and I became more and more quiet inside. The glass actually was ice, and it became more and more heavy and dense. When I thought I would suffocate I heard the unnatural high sounds of the ringing of bells. The ice broke, and I was seeing the white dimensions that strongly attracted me.

I was fearful to lose myself in the maelstrom of endless white dimensions of different nuances which flowed one into the other, and which came to me from all directions. They moved in the direction of a light which was even more bright and white, as a hole into which all the white dimensions disappeared. My inner voice said not to go any further. Thus, I stayed at the edge of the maelstrom, and I did not go any further.

This was my second dream that night, and it didn't wake me up. I continued to sleep until Tamnas Bacsi woke me up. It was an hour after sunrise, and we went together to his house, where I got to drink a glass of brandy, the Hungarian brandy made of apricots, Palinka, and he asked what we had experienced.

I told him about my fear with the grave of the old woman, and he did his usual "mmmm". About my first dream he told me that I had seen my shamanic ancestors fighting, and that they both were fighting to become my master. Because it wasn't clear who the winner was, I had to choose one myself. Both shamans were favoring me, but one of them had to show his superiority as master.

Much later, I had to think about this dream, especially during the bombardments in Germany, where I was forced to work. It always gave me a feeling of trust, that I would be rescued by one of the shamans. Bombs were falling all around us, but we were spared in a concrete cell, thirty of us.

I don't know how much I should attribute to the power of these archetypical images. Maybe these electromagnetic force fields protected me, I don't know. I do know that there is a lot that you can influence with your thoughts.

In any case, Tamas Bacsi told me that one of the shamans came from the north and the other one from the South. One symbolized water, the other fire. I am a Sagittarius, a fire sign, and my ascendent is Cancer, a water sign. That corresponds with my dream; the fighting and the union of opposing polarities.

About my second dream, he told me that it was the shamans who prevented me from disappearing into the white hole. He said that I always had to watch out that I wouldn't end up in the maelstrom. "You can observe it, but don't go any further than the edge of the maelstrom." The painter Melwitsch said, when he had made his white painting, "here we cannot go any further, because here begins another dimension." In the same way, science has progressed so far in observing the smallest particles of matter that the energy of matter cannot be separated from one's own thoughts.

The white light is the energy where you have to arrive. In shamanism, it is called

the crystal consciousness.

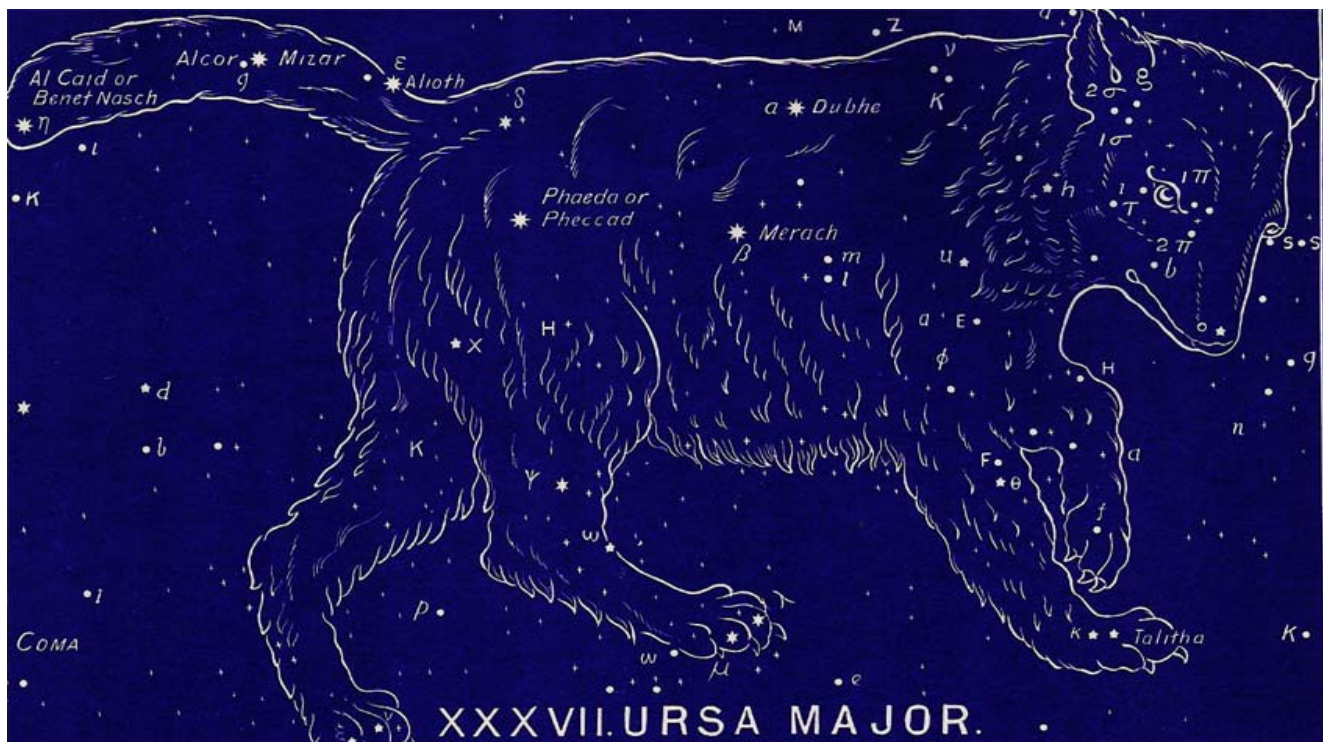
These three events, the searching for the skull of a horse, the red brick, and the sleeping on the cemetery, were part of my initiation in order for me to be more conscious and to experience more knowledge later on. This is also the meaning of a master, to show the direction that fits with the personality of the student, and to bring his hidden talents to development, in service of the spirit.

One day, I was walking through the fields with Tamas Bacsi, and suddenly he found the bottom of a wine bottle on the ground. He said: "I use this to see." he told me that when he looked at the hollow side he could see in the past, and he could look inside himself or the other person, and when he looked at the other upwards curved side he could see into the future.

What really marked him was that he always used ordinary, easy to get objects; and he also used simple thoughts and concepts to express complicated things. Something he gave was that piece of glass to us and said: "Tell me what you are seeing. Not what you think, but what you are seeing."

I remember that I was seeing several shadow figures blending into each other. Then I had to turn it and do the same. I said that I didn't see anything but the reflecting light. He told me to concentrate on this. He didn't explain it to me. I had to experience it myself and 'digest' that experience.

4. The Great Bear (Ursa Major)



Actually I know very little about how Tamas Bacsi got his knowledge. In those times there was not just one master, but several people, wise men and women, who had obtained knowledge. One knew everything about herbs, the other about how to heal animals or people, or they could tell the future by listening to the

leaves of a tree. I did understand that had his knowledge from different sources. He did have a master or a person who had left a deep impression on him, because at home he had some objects that were not magical, but he said: "These come from a wise man." The only thing I know about this man is that he was a shepherd.



The old rune signs, by Joska Soos

He had, for example, a stick which made a very strong impression on me because

it looked so magical to me. It was as big as a walking stick, and it was completely carved with ancient runes, the ancient Hungarian writing, that I could not read. Being children we only knew the ABC's and the Roman and Arabic numbers. Tamas always said about these runes: "This is the real Hungarian. What you are learning from the church is imported, that is not Hungarian." Sometimes he held the stick in his hands, like a rosary, and then he felt it with his thumb, and sang. He caressed the signs and turned the stick very slowly, so he was feeling all the signs, which were cut in a spiral around the stick. When he arrived at the bottom of the stick, he did the same thing reversed going up. I found that very fascinating.

Actually it was a kind of shepherds staff that ended in a double snake head at the top. At the bottom, about ten centimeters from the point, three frogs had been cut. I know that the frog is very important in shamanism, because it stands for our amphibian state, but at that time I was not aware of it. I do remember that, as a child, we went fishing with a kind of basket. Of course, we caught more frogs than fish. Like all boys, we tortured the frogs by pulling off their legs. When Tamas heard of it, he said: "You can absolutely not do that. Otherwise, the soul of the tortured frog will go into your belly and create pain or sickness."

Since that time I had great respect for the frogs, because he had told us that. The other boys stopped doing it because they were afraid to get sick by the spirit of the tortured frogs in their belly. But I did not act out of fear. I had respect for the Old One, and he knew better than I did.

Thus, at the bottom of the stick, there were three frogs, and at the top a double-headed snake. To him it was a very valuable ritual object that he had gotten from his master from whom he had learned the most.



What Tamas also had learned from him, and what he passed on to us, was looking at the stars, especially the Polaris star and the Great Bear. It consists of four stars with a tail behind it. We had to look at the uppermost star, where the tail goes and down again [this is the star Mizar]. He said: "What do you see?" I said: "A star".

Look a little better, do you see something else?"

"Yes," I said, "There is another little light point next to it." Next to this star in the tail of the Great bear is another small star. You have to look very careful in order to see it. There were three or four boys and two girls, and only three of them could see the little star. The others didn't see anything. Tamas said that those who could see it have a good intuition, a good observation, a rationality that is coupled with a feeling for the metaphysical. This connection was very important to him.

When somebody can see this star, then this indicates another thought structure. You can't always see it, it suddenly pops up. I still look at it, and sometimes I think it is my own projection. Much later I came to know that this little star of the fifth magnitude is behind and above the second star in the tail of the Great Bear, and it is called Alcor, which means test. [This comes from the 14th century Arabian name of Al Sadak.] In other civilizations it was also a custom to use this star to test for paranormal abilities in initiation rituals.

In Hungarian, and especially in shamanistic tradition, the Great Bear is very important. We give the Great Bear three names, as with many other constellations: a profane, a sacral and a divine name. The profane name is The Wagon, the sacral name is The Great Bear, and the third, magical and mystical name is the Gönzöl.

The Hungarian etymologists have not been able to find where that word comes from. Literally, it means a person between the gods and humans, who brought us civilization. It is told that the Gönzöl was sent from heaven to teach people practical things on the technical, psychological and psychical level. When people had learned all this, the Gönzöl went back to heaven in his fiery chariot in the direction of the Great Bear.

There is another version of this story in which he wanted to go back after he had accomplished everything, but people grabbed him and ate him to keep his knowledge here on earth. That was the holy or magical cannibalism. Thus, his chariot left without him, and it went to heaven where it is still floating around.

In Hungary there is also a village that is called Gönzöl. It is on an island in the Donau, between Estergom and Komarom, close to the border between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. There are written documents about this place since the twelfth century, but the village is much older. In that village was a family called Gönzöl, and the oldest of most apt member of the family was always the judge in that area. From far away people came to him to ask or hear his judgment, because he was a very just man because he had his knowledge from heaven.

In Hungarian there is another meaning of the word Gönz, when it is said: "he was the Gönz," that means, he is dressed poorly. That is a reference to the Gönzöl who was shaman and walked around in ragged cloths. Gönzöl means mediator, a shaman who sent by heaven to help mankind. Therefore, it was important that Tamas let us always look at the Gönzöl, the Great Bear.

I have another idea about that. In our times we speak of flying saucers, and where they might be from. With many people's cosmology we find that they considered certain constellations holy, because people went to them, or beings came from them. Maybe they should point their radio-telescopes in those

directions to see if they have civilizations. I think that they were not gods, because god is only pure spirit. Maybe they were higher civilizations who came here and stayed and left behind a memory of the visit of the gods or ambassadors of the gods.

In Hungarian mythology, the Gönzöl is not a god either. He is an ambassador, although with the northern people of Siberia, he is called the son of god, or god's faithful servant.

I think that the observation of the Gönzöl or the Polaris star is based on realistic facts, but then too on the psychological or psychic level. Tamas also said that one does not have to look at the star itself to remain in contact with it, but you can put your thought with it when you are falling asleep. Even in the daytime. At that time we didn't know that the starry heaven was also present during the day time. But we had to try to remain contact even during the daytime.

That is a parallel way of thinking. You do not have to have the object in front of you in order to experience it. That is not necessary as we can have direct contact by synchronicity. Tamas Bacsi always said: "Why is it that you can get contact with your ancestors in the Milky Way? That is so far away. Look at your finger, and look at the tree over there, and look to the stars. What did you notice?"

"Nothing," I said, "A finger, a tree, stars."

"What you didn't notice is that looking at these different things takes the same time. There is no difference." That is the simultaneity. That made a big impression on us, But it didn't make us think about it. Now I think that there is way of thinking that can comprehend the immediacy of everything, independent of space and time.. That is the state Tamas Bacsi called "Traveling without moving."

We often went with Tamas Bacsi to the lake, especially when the wind was quiet, and the surface of the water like a mirror. We were just sitting there and we didn't speak. He was looking at the water for hours, fascinated. When we asked him what he was seeing, he answered that he was looking at his master. He was in the presence of his master. He saw him in the reflection of the water. When we asked him what else he was seeing, he said: "Everything you want." he said: "When your master appears, when you see the face of your master, then you can see anything you think about."

Then we asked: "How deep can you see that?"

"Yes," he said, "Even beneath the water, even the bottom you can see, and still deeper, all the way into the underworld, into hell."

There were boys from the vineyard hills, and I myself had an aunt who lived over there. He told these boys: "You don't have to come down from the hills to the lake to see all that. Up on the hill is a deep water well." That was a really deep well, about 60 to 80 meters deep, from which the water had to be hauled.

He said: "You can look at the reflection of the water in that well," Of course, it depended on the light, what you were seeing. On a bright day you could see a light circle of about 50 to 60 cm in diameter, while the well itself was two and a half meters wide. Sometimes you saw a light circle of only 10 cm in diameter. It depended on the lighting and the angle of looking.

"Look at the reflecting point in the water," Tamas said, "and think of somebody. When that person appears, you can ask him a question, or see what happens." As

children, we looked at it as a fun game. We were standing around the well, and looked in it. Of course, all kinds of images came up. Actually it is a kind of psychological test. When you are looking in a bright circle of light, very deep inside a well, then something happens inside your head. You have the feeling of dizziness. That is why it is said that the deep pulls you down. When you are not afraid of the dizzies, and you keep mastery over yourself, then you can feel that inside your brain something is happening. It feels that your brain is turning like a spiral, very, very slowly, or very rapidly. Sometimes it reverses. Tamas probably learned this from his master too. Aside from the stick, this was very important, looking at the flat surface of the water. When Tamas looked at it, he was not only in contact with his master, but he was working himself. He never told me what he wanted to achieve, he only said: "Do you see the Milky Way out there?", "The spirits of the ancestors are there, and one has to live his life in a pure and beautiful way in order to go there." In Hungarian mythology, the fallen heroes and good people are not going to Valhalla, but to the Milky Way. It does not mean that it is a paradise, but life continues like on Earth, but more refined, sublimated. There are no passions, no money, no sickness, nothing of that nature. One is in spherical harmony. This was his thinking. When I think about it, he was using the communication with his master to purify himself. It was a spiritual exercise to change one's inner being. Not only to gain knowledge or to experience something, but to work on his spirit, and to make it a better instrument.



Hungarian Gypsy Camp from old postcard

He was also open for the knowledge of others, like the gypsies he often visited and for whom had great respect. As children, we thought that the gypsies were dirty, because they looked dark and smelled. Our mothers always warned us not to connect with the gypsies, and we obeyed. But Tamas said: "That is not true. It is that skin color that is dark. They come from a country where people have dark skin."

He visited them often. About two kilometers outside the village was a big meadow where the gypsies set up camp for the entire year. The old people stayed there, and the young ones went away in the summer. They did all kinds of handicraft, like making copper pots, or repairing tools. I went there two times, inside their tent, to experience the strange atmosphere.

Tamas Bacsi went to this tent to meet a couple of gypsies, but what they were doing there I don't know. When first I was there, they remained silent and didn't say a word. Some of them smoked a pipe, others were chewing tobacco, were staring, or didn't do anything. He always got red wine to drink, not to drink a lot, but to create a nice atmosphere. Although they didn't speak much, he had a great respect for them, and he said that they were wise people, and that we can learn a lot from them. "Up there in the Milky Way," he said "there is no difference between you and a gypsy. When you become bright, that is where you go." he meant that in order to go the milky Way, your spirit has to be as bright as the Milky Way.

This taciturnity was very characteristic for Tamas Bacsi. He always told me that one can learn more from silence than from a long speech. That was also his method to teach us, and by that he forced us to open our eyes and ears, to be always open.

We often asked him what he was singing, and then he said: "You will know when you will do it yourself. Do what I do, and let the sound emerge from inside, from your belly, from your heart, your throat, but never from your head."

Then we started to sing quietly with our high-pitched children's voices. He never said that it was good or bad what we were doing, just "Continue." That was the way he taught us. He was the example, we had to identify with him. "Don't imitate me," he said "but experience it until you start to vibrate inside."

Sometimes he drew simple signs in the dirt of the soil, with his thumb, or with two or three fingers. We thought, "He is just doing something.", but now I think it had some significance. They were magic signs, and sometimes we imitated it. He primarily did this when people came to him with a certain problem, or had a special question about something they wanted to know. He also drew magical signs on animals that were sick, especially on cows and horses, on the affected area. Sometimes he did this on the head, the chest, the back, and with cows on the udder when they didn't produce enough milk. Then he drew the sign and sang. That was a casting spell, but he never urged us to do that too.

When one draws such signs, as in Chinese or Japanese calligraphy, then they do have a fixed form, but the expression of that fixed form is a personal matter. That is a communication with oneself and with the primal rhythm. That I have experienced myself later on when I started to paint these magical signs. To my

surprise I also found them on the shaman drums of the Eskimos, and the Aboriginals in Australia. This cannot be tradition of course. This is a universal psychological experience of creative rhythms which are related to different states of consciousness.

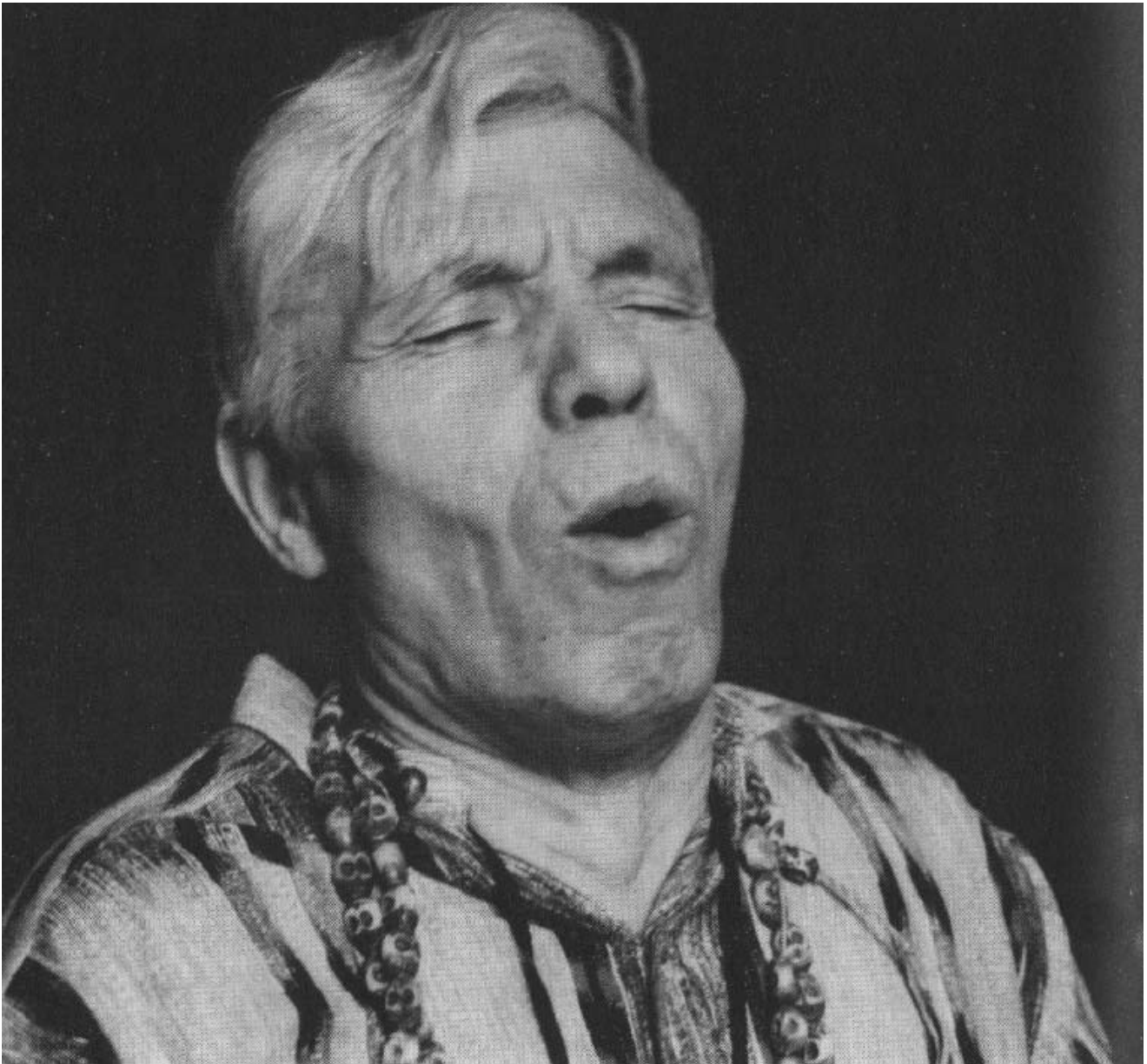
Sometimes Tamas worked on people with signs from their feet to their head. I remember that he did this with descriptive and calligraphic movements as if it was a painting or a tattoo. By means of these movements he tattooed those people, by way of speaking. This was not only advantageous, but it also healed those people, especially from psychosomatic ailments, as most diseases are. Now I am convinced that the tattoos or the bodily paintings are a magical image of the lines of force and centers in man, and they have a symbolic and cosmic meaning. By these different forms and lines, you come into contact with the personal, collective, earthly, and cosmic streams and movements. By this one feels connected with oneself, with other people, the earth, the cosmos, and even the divine. Therefore, I think that by making those movements he was working on the body and its aura. Because he rarely or never touched the body. Usually he kept himself at a distance of about 15 cm of the body, and with cows about 40 to 50cm. His movements looked like the movements of holy dancers in Thailand, or the mudras of Tibetan monks.

He used dancing movements, straight lines, horizontal or vertical, broken lines and spirals. Also, but less often, he worked on one point, with his thumb, or two or three fingers. Then he pushed and pulled back. He often told us that this did not come from himself, but he had learned that from wise people. Therefore, one has to be open to the knowledge of others.

Although Tamas Bacsı was a blacksmith he didn't especially look like an oak tree. In general, the Hungarian people are not that tall, and he was precisely 1.65 meters tall. I know this precisely, because he always said: "I am just right to be a soldier." In his young years, one had to be at least 1.65 cm to become a soldier. Half a centimeter less, and you were no good. I have that in mind very well. He had broad shoulders, not that muscular. He did not look like the anvil he was using. He had the typical Ural-Altaic physiognomy, which a yellowish skin color without looking Chinese or Japanese. A round head with a flax-like beard and mustache, like the Mongols.

He was straight, but by his work, his head was tilted forward a bit. His eyes were brown-black, and his voice was rough and broken, like the voice of a samurai. Usually he was in a double state of mind. Not in the sense that he was elsewhere, but he was in the here and now, and elsewhere at the same time. When he was working people or animals, or sometimes when he was walking ahead of us, then I noticed that he was there and at the same time somewhere else. That was typical for him. I still can see him before me: strong, moving, flowing and spherical at the same time, like the cycle of water, between the ocean and the clouds. A balanced human being.

5. That is the Fool that is Singing



During my junior high school and after that I lived in Budapest with my father and mother, my brother and sister. Nevertheless, I spent my school vacations in the countryside with my grandparents. Thus, I remained in contact with Tamas Bacsi. I often think back about my experiences with him. Because of the war I arrived in the Western Europe, and having lived in Maastricht (southern Netherlands) for eight months, I went to live in Belgium in 1946. Tamas Bacsi died during the war. As I was told later, he was feeling weak, went to bed, and said that would not get out of bed again. According to his way of thinking, it meant that he wanted to die. He was feeling the approaching sickness and

weakness, and did not want to bother anybody. Therefore, he decided to die a couple of weeks or months earlier.

It is commonplace in shamanism that shamans feel their approaching death, the end of their strength. Then they finish what they have to do, and sometimes they just leave the body. Because that is what life is for, to experience death without it being a surprise. Actually one passes on in sound, into a higher vibration, and that you can only experience in the here and now.

It is important not to get into a dream state when dying, but to remain awake, and experience the waking state of the spirit, of the spirit which is independent of the body. The body is only necessary to advance further and to communicate with others.

Tamas Bacsi did not die, but left his body consciously a couple of weeks or months before his normally would have died. When I went on vacation in Hungary in 1965 I wanted to see where he was buried. The area of the cemetery where he was buried was completely neglected and overgrown with weeds.

I asked for the circumstance in which he died, and they told me that years before he had ordered the construction of the totem pole for his grave. He had told people that they didn't have to worry about making one, because it was already under his bed!

There were other farmers who did this. When they were about 50 years of age, they had themselves made a totem pole, and from time to time they rubbed it with oil, because they didn't keep it under the bed but in a room or in a stable. He also had said that he didn't want to be buried in a coffin, but in his Küpelland suba, that is a jacket without sleeves, made from sheepskin, and is primarily worn by shepherds. This was the way he wanted to be buried, in his undershirt and his suba. Actually, he wanted to be hit and burned up by lightning.

Later I remembered that he told me that there are five different ways of being buried, according to the five elements. In earlier times, the psychopomp, the person who guided the deceased and executed the death rituals, determined to what element a person belonged, and how that person would return to that element.

Some people were buried into the earth, other were thrown into the water, or burned to move into the air. The latter happened a lot in Siberia where shamans were put on a lattice, on which the body dried up or was eaten by the birds. This also happened with some North American Indians. In Tibet also the body was cut into pieces, and when the lama who performed the ritual of death blew on his horn, vultures came and feasted. That is the fourth element, the air.

The fifth element is life itself, that is, when you leave your body consciously like Tamas Bacsi. Sometimes it happened that the body was not to be found, that somebody would go into the mountains and went into meditation and dies that way. In ancient times it was custom in Hungary that old men and women who felt that they were going to die, organized a feast, a death feast, and the night after the feast they disappeared and did not come back anymore. Probably they died on in a desolate area, in a cave, or in the woods, and were eaten by wild animals.

There are also stories of people entering caves and coming into contact with

supernatural forces which take them away. According to Hungarian folklore, some shamans disappear into the earth, sometimes even when they are in full strength. The mystery of disappearing can be found in all cultures, but what happens is not known. That is the fifth element, to enter the eternal life consciously.

Tamas Bacsi often said that he would like to be hit by lightning. I often saw him walk outside during a heavy thunderstorm, because he had to do something, in an effort to be consumed by the heavenly fire. In Hungary, there are violent thunderstorms in the summer, during which you think it is the end of the world. People would say: "Don't go outside, you might get an accident.", because sometimes cows and horses were hit by lightning. But he always found it the right time to go do something outside, or to go somewhere. Then he reversed his K p lland suba, with the skin outside and the wool inside, and then he left. He probably hoped to get hit by lightning but that never happened. He was a man of fire, but cremation did not exist at that time in Hungary. They only buried people.

In old times, fishermen were thrown into the water. A stone was strung around the neck, and one at the feet, and then they were slid in their underwear into the river, given to their own element. I myself was present at the burial of a fisherman. To my surprise, after the deceased was put into the grave, his friend threw a bucket of water into the grave.



Coal miners in Belgium

I left Maastricht in 1946, and went to Belgium because it looked easier living over there. But a little later the socialist government came to power, and the big slogan was "to win the mining of the coals". This brought up the idea that all

immigrants from East Europe must work in the coal mines for five years, if not to would be sent back. Because I didn't want to go back to Hungary because of the Russian occupation, I signed that contract.

My spiritual development continued. I continued to work on myself. That became an inner driving force, to come into contact with myself and the surrounding things. That was a continuing process of development that gave me great inner stability in difficult times. It helped me to keep my balance, or to achieve more balance.

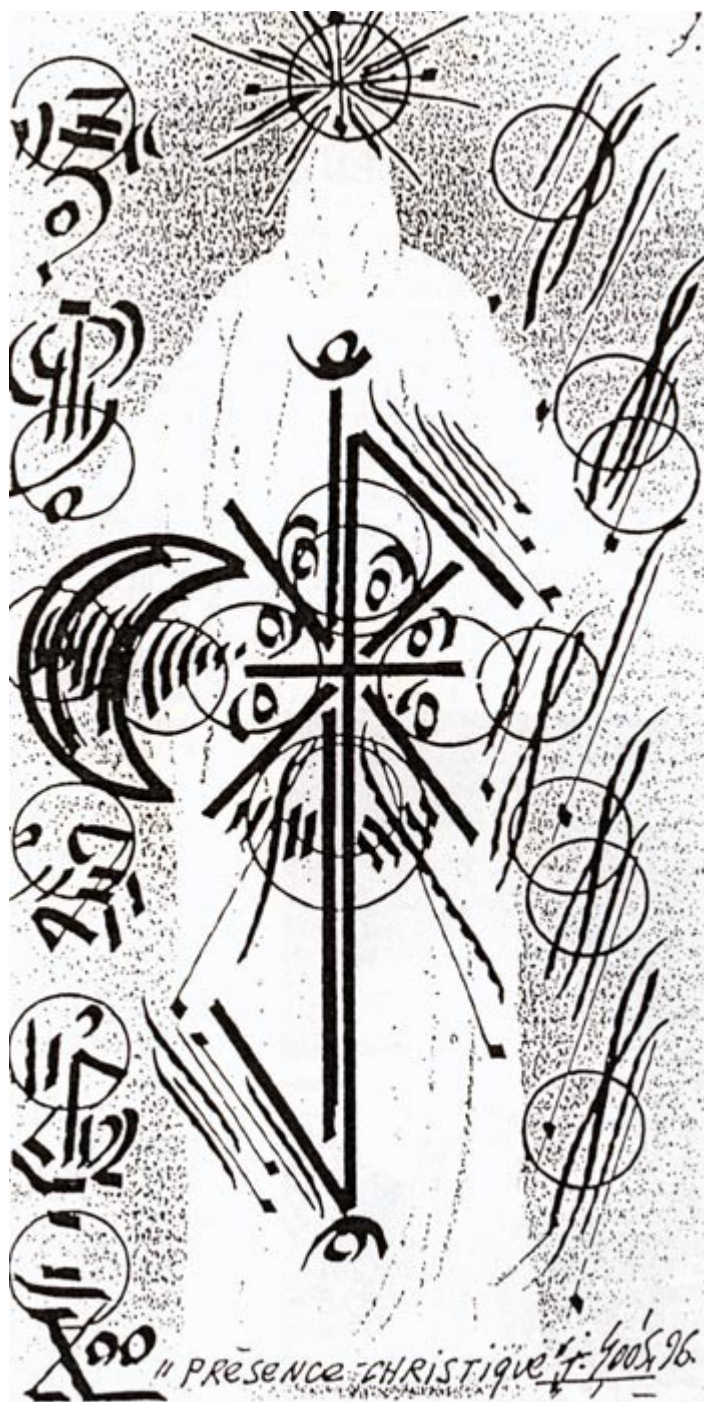


Charbonnage. — Dans la Fosse : Vieux plan incliné dans une veine

Inside a coal mine

In these coal mines I had special experiences of silence and darkness. When the miners, at 1.30h, left by the 3 or 4 km long tunnel to get to the elevator, I stayed behind and turned off my lamp. I stayed there for an hour in total darkness, until the next shift came. It is an extraordinary experience, because you can't see anything. The only thing you hear is the movement of the wooden structures in the corridors, tak, tak, tak... You smell the odor and you are feeling vibrations that shift your consciousness.

There, I was able to distinguish for the first time three kinds of vibrations: the vibrations that come from above, those who come from below, and a third one that moved through the corridors. I was feeling the fine vibration of the air, and of this was warm or less warm. That was quite an experience for me.



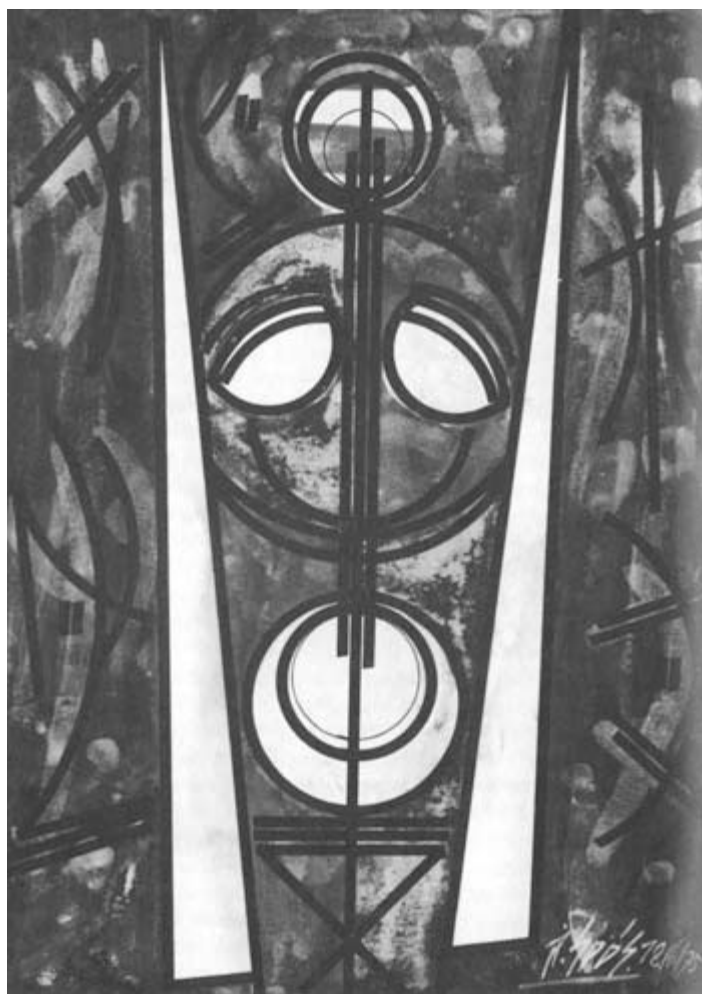
Christ as light being, drawing by Joska Soos

At that time, I also had the first experience of a light being. Suddenly the image came up of Christ as he said: "I am the resurrection, the life." It was so suddenly, that I became afraid, and for weeks I didn't dare to stay behind, but I went with the other workers up to the surface. After that, I continued. It was quite an exceptional opportunity to work on my spiritual development in these circumstances.

I also realized why certain people retreat into caves for a short or long time. In these places one has such super-sensual, supernatural experiences, or rather

non-ordinary experiences. I understood that supernatural perception does not exist. It is actually a higher level of perception, a kind of 'feeling'. That guarded me against the wrong kind of mysticism. I stayed sober, a kind of spiritual materialist, or a material spiritualist. I experience the spirit as a level of vibration anywhere, also in matter.

I recommend everybody to find such a cave, and stay there for a long time, without light or sound. Then we can also feel that the quality of the air is different at different depths. The air consists not only of oxygen and nitrogen, but contains many fine gases. The shaman, the mystic person and the yogi concentrate to draw only certain substances from the air. This way one can work on different abilities within oneself. Thus, one can experiment at different levels of the cave to see how the brain cells react to the different air compositions. That was a real special experience that I have tried to expand and practice since that time.



A shaman totem, one of his totem drawings

When I was working in the coal mines, I met a painter who was also professor at the academy. His name was Marcel Delmotte. I was drawing the totem figures I remembered from the protestant graves, and later the Christ image as light being from the coal mines. I also began to experience the sounds as graphic forms, a

kind of rune writing, but then of the sound which is in it in the literal sense. The three aspects of my art can be connected with different chakras. The totem figures are connected with the first and second chakra. The inner movement, the sound images of the sound that one hears not only with his ears but experiences with his entire body, they work at the third, fourth and fifth chakra. The light beings relate to the sixth and seventh chakra.

From that time period dates my first exposition in Galerie du Parc in Charleroi (1950). Since then, I had regular expositions. At that time I was still working in the coal mines, and later in the steel industry. When I had the time, I went to Delmotte to paint. One day he said: "I have here a couple of students who have great talent to become a portrait painter or landscape painter. But you have such nice memories of your youth, you have to paint these!"

He imagined these as anecdotal paintings, because he himself was a surrealistic painter. For example: "Shaman is dancing, or jumping above the fire." But I felt that I had to give the old shamanic forms new shapes, and those shapes presented themselves spontaneously, first in my dreams, and then as experience. First I looked at the white paper, and then I thought of my master, and then the images came. Sometimes I smeared the shavings of the pencil over the paper, I looked at it, and I drew what I was seeing. That was a Rorschach test. I was seeing all kinds of natural and fantastic elements, demons and people.

I noticed the difference between looking, imagining and perceiving, or hearing and perceiving. Perceiving is something that comes up, not out of the past or fantasy, but by itself, spontaneously. At that moment the seven sensory perceptions melt together into one function, and at the same time it is a practical spiritual exercise.



House in Schaerbeek, Brussels, where Joska Soos lived with his second wife.

I lived in Charleroi from 1956 to 1965, and then I moved to Brussels. In Brussels, I occupied myself only with painting. My wife actually wanted that. She was making enough money as a translator in English, French and Spanish. She said: "Continue what you are doing." Of course, she hoped that my work would become famous, and that I would be able to earn money with it. I had regular expositions, and in 1970 they made a color film of thirty minutes of my paintings. But to become famous, other things are needed. Talent by itself is not sufficient. In any case, what I earned from my paintings was not enough to sustain a family, despite the fact that I was mentioned in a lot of art books. But I continued painting because I noticed that when I stopped painting for about ten days or two weeks, I got a headache that was so severe that no painkiller worked. It had to come out. I had to paint.

Joska drawing the light-sound beings, while he lived in Brussels:



Art is a spiritual exercise for me, like the zen monks who do calligraphy or paintings as an exercise. That is why I already have hundreds of paintings, and I keep on working. I am convinced that they will find their way.





One day it went wrong. I remember it very well, it was October 3rd 1975, because it was a protestant holiday. That is the day when Luther nailed the 95 dogmas of the Reformation on the church door of Wittenburg. That day my wife came back from Mexico City, where she had attended a Congress as a translator. And yes, she had a hotel boy over there, who was working at the bar, a boy of 26 years old, and she was 40. That was the fear of getting old. She came back and told me that couldn't live with me anymore, and she wanted to return. That was a catastrophe and it was so suddenly. We were happily married for 16 years, and we had a daughter. So, in every sense we had a happy marriage. For me it was a tremendous catastrophe. I had all kinds of dark thoughts: to kill her, to commit suicide, to kill us all. I wanted to destroy everything.

Then I started to drink, but that lasted only two weeks because I noticed that it would not solve anything. I felt cornered, and whatever I did, did not solve the problem. Then the sound came up in me. I began to shout as a wounded animal. I remembered that my master Tamas Bacsí did this also when something terrible happened to him.

For example, he had a horse that he loved so much, that it didn't have to do anything. All it did was being in the meadow. It was never saddled, or used to pull a wagon. One day it broke its leg, and I was present when they told Tamas, because somebody was running through town and shouting: "His gray horse has wounded his leg."

Nobody knew how this happened, but everybody wanted to see how the Old One would react. That is why I was running along, with about ten other people. When we arrived, and he listened to the news, he didn't say anything. He took his knife,

a large knife that was used to kill pigs, and went to the meadow. There his gray horse was lying.

He was kneeling with the horse, and began to caress the neck of the horse, and whispered in its ear. He caressed the horse with his left hand, and then suddenly...this was not crying, he shouted, extremely wild, as a wild animal that is getting killed. At the same time he trusted the knife in the heart of the horse. The horse made two or three reflex movements, and it was over. It suddenly came up, that shouting.

That also happened another time. He had a granddaughter who had diphtheria, and her throat was being squeezed shut slowly. He couldn't heal her. I didn't see it happening, but others told me. He stayed with her and sang softly. When the child had her last convulsions, Tamas shouted violently, as an animal. That shouting also came up in me when I was feeling so powerless.

I picked up a large aluminum cake bottom, and started to hit it. First I wanted to destroy everything around me, But I thought "It is too valuable." I was able to think that clearly. Then I took an aluminum baking tray, and hit it until it was broken, completely broken. I was shouting as loud as I could. Then I took a second one, but I hit it less hard, so it would last longer, but that one broke too. Then I took a plastic bucket. That was my first drum. A kitchen bucket. All means are OK. It doesn't have to be a real drum. It can be something that is around, on which you can make sound, to express yourself and even to destroy it.

In this way, I was drumming for a couple of weeks. The neighbors were saying: "That is the fool that is singing." Of course, they knew the situation with my wife, and they showed a lot of understanding for my pain. "He will stop.", they said. Actually I didn't stop, but I stopped shouting that loud.

One day, a spiritual friend came to visit me, a woman I had known since 1969. It was the first time that I did that when someone else was present. That was my first deliberate shamanization.

During the singing, I was feeling like I was in a large forest, and I saw a wild boar approaching me, and it wanted to crush me. Suddenly I felt a great power behind me, what was not part of me, as if my guardian spirit or my master was present behind me. I don't know who it was, but its presence made the boar dissolve before it could reach me. At that moment I heard a bird singing on the branch of a tree, still during that shamanization. After that I felt relieved and lighter. I felt that the worst evil had been dissolved or atomized, and that the sound came from above, from higher spheres.

My friend was there when I described and imitated to her the wild boar and the bird.

She said: "Take it all in, as a documentary for yourself." The next time she came with a tape recorder. Since that time I have recorded all my shamanizations on tape, for myself. At present, I have 445 big four track spools of tapes, each with 200 minutes, on which everything has been recorded.



After that I wanted to bring myself in balance psychologically and psychically. I tried to use the sound for practical things, to get my wife back who had returned to Mexico. I felt that I could get her back by the sound, independent of her will. But the inner voice said: "You can do that, but after a certain time, after a couple of months, the same thing will happen, and then it will be worse. It is better to leave it behind, not to repair it, do nothing. Let it happen."

It is important to respect the free will of people, even when they do something that is against their own well-being. It is necessary to help them when they ask for it. One should not interfere when they reject or resist help.

In the course of a couple of weeks these negative forces gradually diminished. Other sounds arose, and I began to perceive. That is a process. One cannot make spiritual progress when one has not liberated oneself from human tensions and conflicts. This is the first step, to free oneself. When that has happened one comes into contact with different levels of consciousness, the different spheres of consciousness.



In the spring of 1981 I went to London. That was a kind of call, like I sometimes feel that I have to retreat for a while. I had the feeling that there was an experience waiting for me.



Bunnhill Fields



Grave of William Blake

In the spring of 1981 I went to London. That was a kind of call, like I sometimes feel that I have to retreat for a while. I had the feeling that there was an experience waiting for me.

First I went to visit the museums and the churches, because churches also have a great concentration of power. Several times I also went to the oldest cemetery of London, Bunhill Fields, which goes back to the 16th century, and where great men are buried like Cromwell and William Blake. I often returned to the cemetery to experience it. I had learned that from Tamas Bacsi, that the simplest way to make contact with the ancestors is to go to the cemetery, especially to the oldest part, where often enough there are old grave sings. Since that time, wherever I go as a tourist, I find the shortest way to the cemetery. That is a special experience. That connects to the work as a psycho pomp. There one can also help people, because it is one's duty to help others, even the deceased.



Victoria-and-Albert-museum

One day, I arrived at Portobello Road where all the junk shops are. I saw all kinds of Tibetan ritual objects. I knew that Tibetan Buddhism was connected with shamanism, but I had not been interested. When I saw these objects I was getting a very strange feeling. A kind of memory surfaced in which I had not only seen these objects before but I had also handled them.

I asked if one could see more of those objects somewhere else. They told me to go to the Victoria and Albert museum. I went there, and I looked at the different objects for a long time and with interest. I noticed that there was a man who was watching me for a long time, and then he approached me and asked if I was interested in those objects. Luckily he spoke better French than spoke English. I told him I was a descendant from a shaman clan, and that I felt very attracted to these objects. He gave me an address to go to, and to tell them that he had sent me.



singing bowls

It was the address of a Tibetan antique dealer, a young man of about 35 years of age, who was in contact with a group of lamas who sold all kinds of objects to him, which probably were part of their personal luggage when they had fled Tibet. When I arrived at the address, he expected me because the other person had called him. After he closed the shop, he told me that there was a small Tibetan community in London. They had an eating place where he took me. That was a small house where many Tibetans came to eat and drink, and sometimes there were monks present too. This way I made contact with the Tibetan community. Once in a while there were non-Tibetans who had spiritual interests in Lamaism. This way I came into contact with the red hats of the karmapa order. With them I attended my first singing meditation. This way I kept my connection with them. I noticed that every time there was a monk on a chair in a corner who did not participate. I was asking myself why he did not sit with the others. Suddenly I felt that he was watching us, that he was sitting there to observe us. The next time I smiled at him, and he understood that I knew why he was there. I regularly attended, and we talked about different aspects of Lamaism. They asked me what I had experienced, especially about the ritual of the psycho pomp. They made a Tibetan horoscope of me from which they concluded that I was a Tibetan lama in a previous life, and before that a Chinese mandarin and Taoist. They executed a ritual to bring me and a couple of others in contact with our

genetic past, but I was not allowed to be present the entire time. That was quite an experience. I intended to stay in London for 2 months but I ended up staying for 5 months.

They also used singing bowls. They even had a small bowl made of real quartz crystal, and another one that was 80% gold. The other bowls were made from a special bronze, five of them, which were hit and rubbed by a kind of stick with a piece of felt at the top. This gave a dry and penetrating sound.

When I asked if I could buy one, but a small one, they said: "No, they are not for sale, but if you feel attracted to them, we have others." They took me to a kind of storage room, with all kinds of bowls stacked on top of each other, from which I could choose. I said: "I rather that you choose them for me." Thus, they choose the bowls for me. They also had a very big bowl that was placed on a stand, and which they hit, not strongly but short and dry. The monk listened to it, and when the sound came back he hit it again, and a third and a fourth time, just at the right moment. That sounded incredible, like a motor. He said to take the sound inside of us. I felt myself attracted in an incredible way as if I had found a piece of myself. With them I experienced a special atmosphere that changed the direction I was going in. They gave me a particular direction to go. They also confirmed that one can sing a mantra without the fixed words, to sing it spontaneously.

They proposed that I would go into a retreat of three years, three months and three days in a monastery in northern Scotland. I wanted to reflect on it, and I felt that I did not need that. When I returned after a week, and before I could say anything, I was gently told by the lama astrologers that they had read in my horoscope that I did not need it. He said: "You don't need a ritual anymore." That is true, when you are in the sound, you don't need ritual.

6. His Later Years



Joska Soos in his shamanizing room.

His book was published in 1985, which was not yet the highlight of Joska Soos' life as a shaman and an artist. As the interest in spiritual subjects in general, and shamanism as well, was increasing, he started giving lectures and workshops. He made sound recordings of shamanic singing with ritual sound objects, one of them related to the seven levels of consciousness, and another to the seven chakras.

I met Joska in 1989 when he was 68. He had moved from Brussels to Merksem in Antwerp, with his new girlfriend Monique Franken, the year before. He had mastered air brush painting, which was much more expressive than the drawings he had been making before. His garage was packed with them. His living room was on the second floor, where besides the paintings, the whole room was packed with Tibetan ritual objects and statues that he had bought from the Tibetan monks in London. These were all old objects, which would now be considered antiques. He showed me copper statues that had the paper spell still sealed inside the bottom of the statues (antique dealers take this out to sell these separately). He had two to three foot long wooden phurba's (ritual daggers) hanging on the wall. He showed me a human skull plate, covered at one side silver and adorned. These are used to put on one's head to feel the spiritual vibration of the lama it

came from. There was a three-foot wide double dorje made from red copper, that was so heavy that you could not lift by yourself. It came from a Tibetan temple. On the third floor, where he had his little shamanization room, he had a rack full of ritual objects. Large drums with a long handle were hanging on the opposite wall. In the back a huge mala was hanging on a hook, I estimate that the beads were on a eight-foot-long cord. The beads themselves were about two inches long, and had been carved into skulls. The beads themselves were carved from the bones of deceased lamas. In another room he had a lot of singing bowls, pre-1959 (when the Chinese invaded Tibet). They too were old. I bought several of them, and had them later dowsed for their content and age. Three of them dated from the 1800's.

A small carpet in front of the door of his shamanization room had images of skulls on it, how fitting to welcome a visitor!

Visiting Joska Soos at his place was always like going into wonderland. When I left the house through the front door, it was as if I was stepping from another dimension back into the everyday world.

He always listened carefully to my questions, and gave me a lot of insight. Whenever I called him on the telephone, or when I was at his place, he was always singing with guttural sounds. He also explained me how to do this, and how to sing a mantra without words.

On August 15, 2008, Joska Soos left his physical body behind. He was 87 years old. Joska Soos, the man, his art work and his spiritual message should not be forgotten!

